

Italy backs Egypt's efforts

MILAN (R) — Prime Minister Bettino Craxi met Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Sunday and said Italy would support Egypt in tackling the country's economic problems. "Italy will support Egypt's sound arguments before the International Monetary Fund (IMF)," Mr. Craxi told reporters after an hour of talks with the Egyptian president. Mr. Mubarak, who arrived in Milan from Athens, on the last leg of a tour of several European countries, is seeking as much as \$1 billion of standby credits from the IMF. "We all have an interest in seeing Egypt remain a stable nation and in helping it to resolve its very great economic and social problems," Mr. Craxi said. "Italy is willing to discuss a broader involvement in the form of special aid to Egypt," he added, but gave no details. Mr. Craxi said Italian aid to Egypt was likely to be given on an international level as well as under bilateral arrangements. Earlier Mr. Mubarak had made a brief stopover in Athens where he discussed Middle East developments and bilateral issues with Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu.

Special Christmas Special

Jordan Times

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Assad receives Saudi message

DAMASCUS (AP) — Saudi Arabian Education Minister Sheikh Abdul Aziz Khawarizmi flew in unexpectedly Sunday carrying a message from King Fahd to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) reported. Sheikh Khawarizmi delivered the letter in a meeting with Mr. Assad after which he left for home. Contents of the message were not disclosed. But King Fahd has shown increasing concern in recent days about the fighting in Lebanon between the Shi'ite Amal militiamen and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) fighters.

Kuwaiti guards kill 2 infiltrators

KUWAIT (AP) — Kuwait said Sunday its coastal patrols opened fire on a boat carrying 22 unidentified infiltrators, killing two of them. The rest were arrested. An Interior Ministry official was quoted by the Kuwait News Agency as saying the patrol opened fire when the boat entered Kuwait's southeast territorial waters at 4:30 a.m. and ignored warning signals. The infiltrators came in a boat and were then lowered into a small wooden canoe, he said. The boat tried to slip into a marshy area when the warning signals were directed, he said. "The concerned authorities are investigating to determine the details of the infiltration," the unidentified official was quoted as saying.

Nicaragua detains American suspect

MANAGUA (AP) — An American carrying military maps has been arrested on suspicion of spying in a restricted area near a Sandinista air force base, the Sandinista government said Sunday. The government identified the arrested man as Sam Nesley Hall, who according to reports in the United States is the 49-year-old brother of U.S. Congressman Tony P. Hall. "Sam Hall was seen in a military base in Nicaragua. He was captured. We found in his shoes some maps," Foreign Ministry spokesman Angel Saballos said in a telephone interview. "He said that he was working for an organization that... specialised in intelligence and espionage on military objectives... and that he was working for the U.S. government interests," she said.

Najibullah flies home from Moscow

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The head of the Communist Party of Afghanistan, Mr. Najibullah, flew home to Kabul on Sunday after meetings in Moscow with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and other officials. Mr. Najibullah left for Moscow last Thursday with a high-level delegation including Prime Minister Ali Kishnamand. It was Mr. Najibullah's first visit to the Soviet Union since he assumed power as secretary general of the Communist Party in May, replacing Babrak Karmal. Mr. Karmal was relieved of all his remaining posts on Nov. 21.

Fateh refuses to leave Maghdousheh positions without guarantees

New Amal-PLO truce plan founders

Combined agency dispatches

MAGHDOSHEH — Fighters of the Fateh group of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) clung to posts in battle-scarred Maghdousheh village on Sunday reiterating preconditions for their withdrawal from the strategic hilltop position.

About 100 Palestinians from Damascus-based groups handed some positions in the South Lebanon village to pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) militiamen, neutral in the conflict, but Fateh fighters loyal to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said they had occupied them.

"All positions evacuated... have been filled again by PLO forces," a PLO official told Reuters. "There will be no withdrawal from Maghdousheh until we receive minimum guarantees."

He said these were an end to the Shi'ite Amal militia's siege of the Palestinian refugee camps of Rashidiyeh near Tyre and Shatilla in Beirut. Talks would have to follow to define a new basis for Lebanese-Palestinian relations, he added.

There was no immediate reaction from Amal or Iranian mediators to the latest setback to peace efforts, already shaken by frenzied fighting on Saturday at refugee camps in Beirut.

Iranian diplomat Mohammad

Wednesday as the two sides bickered over how far the Palestinians should pull back in return for an end to Amal's siege of Rashidiyeh.

Police said guns fell silent in Beirut and the southern Lebanese port cities of Sidon and Tyre as Iranian officials tried to set up a new mechanism to bring about a truce accord.

Syria and Libya have agreed to act as guarantors of the Iranian-brokered plan to consolidate a ceasefire called at Sidon Saturday, according to a Palestinian spokesman.

A Fateh military leader, identified only as Major Alaa, put Fateh forces in Sidon's Ain Al Hilweh and Mieh Mieh refugee camps on alert and said he was bringing reinforcements into Maghdousheh to replace the withdrawing Palestinians.

Fateh fielded an estimated 250 fighters in the Nov. 24 attack that dislodged Amal fighters from Maghdousheh.

Hizbollah took no sides in the Amal-Palestinian confrontation. Although Shi'ite, it does not share the determination of Nabih Berri's Amal militiamen to prevent the PLO from rebuilding the power base in Lebanon lost as a result of Israel's 1982 invasion.

The Maghdousheh withdrawal is required under the Iranian plan before Amal would allow food and medical supplies to enter pressure against the Shatilla camp in Beirut.

Firebombs hurled at Arab home in East Jerusalem

Palestinian leaders decry attacks on Jews

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

Two firebombs were thrown at a Palestinian home in East Jerusalem on Sunday in the latest incident of anti-Arab Jewish violence in the Holy City, where fears were further aggravated by the stabbing of an Israeli on Friday.

According to Israeli police, the latest attack caused extensive damages but no casualties. The Israeli firm news agency said the bombs smashed two windows and set a bed on fire.

The attack followed a statement issued by a group of Palestinian leaders condemning Friday's stabbing of a Jew in the Old City. The condemnation was issued Saturday night in East Jerusalem and signed by some 20 Palestinians, among them Hanna Siniora, editor of the Al Fajr daily and attorney Fayez Abu Rahme.

Both men are known supporters of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). "We consider this act to directly contravene the civilised context of our legitimate Palestinian struggle to realise our just principles," said the statement.

One of the signatories, Ibrahim

Karaeen of the Palestine Press Service, said that "of course we are against killing Jews because they are Jews." Speaking on Israel radio, Mr. Karaeen added that "knifing a Jew won't help... it won't implement our ambitions."

The stabbing victim, who was attacked on a deserted street near the Old City on Friday night, was in stable condition with stomach wounds at Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital.

The daily Yediot Ahronot reported that he was the seventh Jew to be stabbed in Jerusalem over the past 15 months.

Police deployed large forces in East Jerusalem and the Old City to prevent an outbreak of anti-Arab violence of the kind set off last month by the stabbing death of a Jewish student. On Saturday some stones were thrown by Jews and Arabs at each other in the walled city, but there were no injuries.

Jerusalem's Israeli mayor, Teddy Kollek, attributed the attacks on Israelis in Jerusalem to the frustrations of young Palestinians growing up under Israeli occupation in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

"The danger of personal hatred among those who grew up in the past 20 years (under occupation) is more dangerous than organised PLO attacks," Mr. Kollek said on Israel radio.

Later Sunday Israeli Television broadcast rare interviews with some of the signatories to the statement issued Saturday.

Mustafa Natshe, deposed mayor of Hebron, said: "It is part of our responsibility to see that we keep peace in Jerusalem."

Mr. Siniora said: "After the events of last week, it was a spontaneous decision to make a public statement and change the image of the Palestinian people."

The Palestinian statement said the attack contravened "the civilised context of our legitimate Palestinian struggle to realise our just demands."

The Palestine Press Service said that besides Mr. Karaeen, Mr. Natshe, Mr. Abu Rahme and Mr. Siniora, signatories included Birzeit University Professor Sami Nusseibeh and spokesman Albert Aghaziar, Arab Studies Society head Faisal Al Hussein and newspaper editor Daoud Kuttab.

Regan vows not to resign

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — White House Chief-of-Staff Donald Regan has vowed to stay in his post, rejecting demands that he resign over the Iran-contra arms scandal, Senate Republican leader Robert Dole said Sunday.

"I'll tell you one thing. I'm not leaving the White House," Mr. Dole quoted the embattled chief adviser to President Ronald Reagan as saying in a conversation Saturday night.

Both allies and critics of the president have demanded that Mr. Regan take responsibility for the worst crisis of the Reagan presidency: Secret arms sales to Iran and the diversion of profits to right-wing Nicaraguan rebels, known as contras.

Mr. Regan has denied knowledge of the affair, but he and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director William Casey have been widely criticised for, at the very least, failing to know what was happening.

The president himself has acknowledged authorising arms sales to Iran but has said he was unaware of the diversion of funds to the contras.

Some of the president's closest political advisers — and even his wife Nancy, according to some reports — have been pushing the president to drop Mr. Regan.

"Don Regan is going to stay," Mr. Dole said in a television interview. "I don't know about Bill Casey."

The statement was the first firm evidence that Mr. Regan has dug in his heels against calls for his ouster.

Attorney General Edwin Meese announced on Nov. 25 that up to \$30 million in arms sales proceeds had gone to the Nicaraguan rebels.

The same day, Vice-Admiral John Poindexter resigned as Mr. Reagan's national security adviser and Adm. Poindexter's top aide, Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North,

was fired by Mr. Reagan. Mr. Meese said Adm. Poindexter and Col. North were the only White House officials familiar with the funds diversion.

Both men have refused to testify before Congressional committees investigating the affair.

Mr. Reagan, under attack from all sides, took a break from the controversy on Sunday by spending a few hours recording a special Christmas programme for television.

Aides hope the holiday season will allow the president to focus on other issues, diverting attention from the scandal that has rocked his administration.

Mr. Dole has warned that unless Mr. Reagan acts quickly to deal with the scandal, there "would be a sort of a gridlock for the next two years with Congress, (because) we're consumed with this..."

Israel unfolds own version of U.S.-Iran intrigue, page 2

Dajani visits Balqa region

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Interior Rajai Dajani on Sunday made an inspection tour of the Balqa region and visited police departments there and met with heads of municipal councils. At a meeting held in Salt attended by provincial governors and heads of municipal and village councils, Mr. Dajani announced that he would be making similar tours of various regions to take a close look into the needs and requests of the local inhabitants. The new five-year plan of the Ministry of Interior aims at improving services to the public but these plans require constructive cooperation on the part of the public, the minister said. Referring to road accidents in the Balqa region, the minister said a series of recent measures announced by the ministry were designed to reduce traffic accidents and safeguard human life and property. The minister said that the Interior Ministry would hold training seminars for provincial governors to improve their efficiency. At the meeting Balqa Governor Muhyum Khreisha outlined the various projects included in the five-year plan for the Balqa region.



KING VISITS ARMY UNITS: His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday shakes hands with members of the Armed Forces during an inspection visit he paid to units of the Fourth Royal Mechanised Division. Accompanied by Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief General Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker, the King laid a wreath on a monument that

commemorates the division's martyrs and recited verses of the Holy Koran. Later the King was briefed on the units' duties and training programmes. The King also reviewed a parade of the troops. At the end of the visit the King was presented with a token gift.

ICHIH briefed on Jordanian relief programmes in Sudan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Participants of the seventh and final plenary meeting of the Geneva-based Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (ICHIH) were briefed on Sunday on Jordan's relief programme to help Sudan overcome the wave of famine and drought that struck the North African country in late 1984.

Dr. Anwar Bilbeisi, member of the National Committee for Solidarity with Sudan, told the meeting that more than eight million people out of Sudan's total 21-million population were victims of drought and that Jordan was assisting Sudan through a medical and social welfare relief programme.

Dr. Bilbeisi said Jordan, under the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, was one of the first Arab countries to respond to Sudan's appeals to assist its drought victims.

The ICIH meetings opened here on Saturday under the co-chairmanship of Crown Prince Hassan and His Highness Prince

Agar Khan. Dr. Bilbeisi told the commission's members, a number of the world's former and serving leaders, that a Jordanian medical team dispatched to Sudan had settled in the city of Kass, located on the Sudanese border with Chad and Central Africa, and set up a hospital and health clinics to help the people there.

The Jordanian medical team, he said, has also launched an immunisation campaign for citizens in the area of Kass and made feasibility studies for the establishment of an agriculture school and expanding a new water and electricity network.

A documentary film of Jordan's relief efforts in Sudan was also screened during Sunday's meeting.

Sunday's meeting, which was held behind closed doors, reviewed and discussed a concrete draft proposal over a new international human order as dealt with by the ICIH in its meetings over the past three years. The three-part draft proposal will be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly in the first half of 1987 after a group of the commission's members meet

sometime next month to finalise it. The ICIH, which held its first plenary meeting in November 1983 is an independent body which works outside the framework of the United Nations. It has dedicated its discussions to three-broad areas of concern: humanitarian norms, natural and man-made disasters and on vulnerable groups.

Another topic to be dealt with during the Amman session is the future of the ICIH, whose three year mandate ends this month. Discussions on this issue will touch on the commission's future, financial and administrative arrangements and strategies. The Jordan Times has learnt that during a 30-minute meeting on Sunday evening, the 18 ICIH members present discussed the issue.

However, Prince Hassan is meeting the local and foreign correspondents Monday morning, immediately after the seventh plenary sessions end, to brief them on the outcome of the three-day meetings, the major highlights of the commission's three-part draft proposal and other related subjects.

Iraq reports new raid on Dehloran facility

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq said its warplanes attacked a telecommunications station in the western Iranian town of Dehloran on Sunday for the second time in 48 hours while its anti-aircraft gunners shot down an Iranian F-4 jet.

The station in Dehloran, 290 kilometres southeast of Baghdad, was hit to hamper repair work on damage sustained in the previous raid on Friday, a military spokesman said.

He said the F-4 fighter plane attempted to cross into Iraqi air space over the southern sector of the Gulf warfront but was hit by anti-aircraft fire and was seen falling in front of the Iraqi positions.

Earlier on Sunday, Iran's official news agency said the Iranian navy fired a missile on Iraq's Mina Al Bakr oil jetty in the northern corner of the Gulf.

Kennedy ends visit after pledging to push for more U.S. aid to Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — U.S. Senator, Edward Kennedy wound up a three-day visit to Jordan on Sunday and later arrived in Cairo where he was scheduled to meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to discuss "strained U.S.-Egyptian relations."

During his stay in Jordan, the Democratic senator from Massachusetts received by His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and other high-ranking government officials. According to well-informed sources, during these meetings Sen. Kennedy promised "that he would push for the approval of U.S. financial aid to Jordan in the Senate."

The sources said that Sen. Kennedy's efforts would include supporting American financing of Jordan's \$1.2 billion programme for developing the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Jordan has officially asked the U.S. government for \$150 million annually in financial

aid to support the development programme for the occupied territories.

During the meetings, the sources said, Sen. Kennedy was "mainly listening" to the official Jordanian position on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the U.S.-Iran arms deal.

But the sources added that Sen. Kennedy also tried to justify his opposition to a \$1.9 million arms sale to Jordan last year. Sen. Kennedy had even sponsored a bill which called for blocking the arms sale unless Jordan agreed to enter into direct negotiations with Israel.

According to the sources Sen. Kennedy explained that the congressional opposition to the arms sale "was not directed against Jordan... but against (U.S. President Ronald) Reagan's policy of trying to win over the friendship of other countries through arms sale."

The sources said that Sen. Kennedy also explained "that the discussion of the arms sale came at a time when the Congress was

trying to block Mr. Reagan from pursuing such a policy."

In another interview with AP on Saturday, Mr. Kennedy said that the United States should support Jordan's effort to aid Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories.

He said he expected increased American help for the programme.


"I think there's a very clear commitment of Jordan to West Bank development," said the senator. "That development, I think, can improve the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of those inhabitants in the West Bank... and I think clearly the United States should be a very firm and strong supporter."

Mr. Kennedy said Congress last year appropriated about \$15 million, but he added: "The administration has only indicated a willingness to spend half that amount."

"I think clearly it (the donation) will be increased and supported," Mr. Kennedy said. He did not specify a figure.

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BACK IN JORDAN

U.K. reportedly shipped tank engines, spares and radar equipment to Iran

LONDON (AP) — A newspaper reported Sunday that Britain shipped 50 Chieftain tank engines, spares for Scorpion armoured cars and radar equipment worth a total of £35 million (\$50 million) to Iran last month.

The weekly Observer said the shipment left for the Gulf from the north west England port city of Liverpool on Nov. 21 in 14 containers. Listed on an export licence as electric and engineering equipment.

The paper said it had been given access to documents describing the shipment. It said the sale was agreed to in July between a government-controlled defence sales organisation and Iranian arms buyers based in London.

The government has said it has banned the sale of "lethal" equipment to Iran or Iraq that could significantly help either side to prolong or exacerbate their 6-year-old war.

On Tuesday, Junior Defence Minister Archibald Hamilton told the House of Commons that Britain handled military contracts with Iran as late as October but that anything sold was "non-lethal."

Mr. Hamilton said the trade was restricted to contracts signed before Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was toppled in the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

In October 1985, the Defence Ministry said it has delivered spare parts for tanks and armoured cars to Iran under existing contracts.

On Thursday, the Daily Telegraph disclosed that the government had granted an export licence to Plessey Co. Plc to sell £240 million (\$340 million) worth of aircraft radar-detection equipment to Iran.

The paper said Plessey will supply six AR-3D Static Air Defence systems for Iran's

borders with the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, where Soviet forces have been fighting Afghan rebels for nearly seven years.

The Foreign Office said the radar sets would be 1,200 kilometres away from the Iran-Iraq conflict.

Iran arrests Briton after armed clash

In a separate development Iran's news agency said Sunday a British passport holder had been arrested after trying to infiltrate into Iran from Pakistan and engaging border guards on both sides in a shootout.

The agency, monitored by Nicola Nicola and said he was arrested "some time ago" in the Mir Javeh area.

He was arrested inside Iranian territory while shooting at Pakistani border guards. Iranian gendarmes officers arrested

him after an armed clash, the agency said.

The agency claimed that a British passport, documents and maps found on him raised suspicion that Britain was trying to create tension in the region, "and has prepared extensive plans for clashes in the area between Iran and Pakistan."

Other culprits with similar intentions may have infiltrated into Iran from Pakistan and are being sought by police, the agency said.

The head of the British interest section at the Swedish embassy in Tehran, Edward Chaplin, was recently summoned to the Iranian Foreign Ministry concerning the arrested Briton, the agency said.

Chaplin was warned about the "negative consequences of such moves," it said.

Last week, Iran announced that British businessman-journalist John Roger Cooper, detained in Iran for over a year, has been charged with spying.

The announcement was made after Britain warned that Cooper's continued arrest would prevent the upgrading of diplomatic relations, cut off in 1982 between the two countries.

Khashoggi made \$250,000 in arms deal, Israeli paper says

TEL AVIV (AP) — Saudi Arabian businessman Adnan Khashoggi made \$250,000 from a seven-day loan to finance the first shipment of U.S. arms to Iran, an Israeli newspaper said Sunday.

Mr. Khashoggi admitted in a television interview last week that in 1985 he advanced \$1 million to Iranian arms merchant Manucher Ghorbanifar "to get things going."

Zeev Schiff, writing in the daily Haaretz, said Iran paid Israel \$5 million for the shipment of 500 TOW anti-tank missiles in return for the release of U.S. hostage Benjamin Weir in September 1985.

Schiff said the money was transferred via Switzerland to an Israeli government account at Bank Otzar Hachayal.

Some of the money went to cover the expenses of Israeli arms dealer Yaakov Nimrodi, a business associate and friend of Mr. Khashoggi's who was instrumental in organising the first deal, Schiff wrote. He did not say how much Mr. Nimrodi took.

Previous news reports have said the weapons alone were valued at \$3.5 million.

Schiff said it was still unclear whether the rest of the money was given to the United States to pay for the weapons or whether it went "to other channels overseas."

Schiff did not elaborate. But the daily Davar reported that the money paid by the Iranian government did not cover Israel's costs. Davar quoted an unidentified source as saying it was for that reason that "we went on to another system in January 1986."

Under the new system Israel eliminated middlemen such as Mr. Nimrodi and only acted as a transfer point for weapons brought there by the United States. Until then it had supplied the weapons from its own stocks, which were later replenished by the United States.

NSC aide said to have ties with key people in Iran

arms deal

WASHINGTON (AP) — Michael Ledeen, a consultant to the National Security Council who reportedly was involved in events leading up to the sale of U.S. arms to Iran, is a writer and an academic with conservative views and good contacts in Iran.

Ledeen, 45, once worked as a special adviser to former Secretary of State Alexander Haig. He is now a senior fellow at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a Washington research organisation with a conservative orientation.

A well-known figure in government and journalistic circles in Washington, Ledeen has been identified in published reports in Israel and the United States as a key player in the initial talks that eventually resulted in the sale of weapons — through Israel — to Iran in summer 1985.

Ledeen refused to comment Saturday.

Last week, he testified before a closed session of the Senate Intelligence Committee, which is investigating revelations that profits from the sale of U.S. arms to Iran were diverted to Nicaraguan rebels.

Ledeen has said his involvement in any Iran programme ended in November 1985, and he was unaware of payments to help the contras.

Ledeen's name also was raised in connection with a 1985 meeting with arms merchant Manucher Ghorbanifar, an Iranian expatriate, who, along with Adnan Khashoggi, a Saudi Arabian, were reported to be middlemen in the deals.

Ledeen told associates that he met Ghorbanifar several times in Europe between July and December 1985, the Chicago Tribune reported a month ago.

The exact details of how the arms shipments began in 1985 are cloudy, but Israeli officials said Ledeen told former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres in the early spring of 1985 that the United States wanted to re-establish contact with Iran.

The officials, speaking on condition they remain anonymous, said Ledeen told Mr. Peres of President Ronald Reagan's concern for William Buckley, the CIA station chief who was kidnapped by pro-Iranian Shi'ite Muslims in Beirut in March 1984. An ex-hostage, David Jacobsen, says he thinks Buckley died in captivity in June 1985.

Hours after speaking with Ledeen, Mr. Peres talked to Schwimmer, the U.S.-born founder of Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), according to a report in Haaretz, an Israeli newspaper. Schwimmer had become an independent arms dealer after running IAI for 26 years.

Many Lebanese face bleak Christmas

By Michael Kuli
Reuter

BEIRUT — "I was barefoot, carrying my children and running away from the fighting. My husband went back to get a blanket. We never saw him again."

For Miryeh Kazzi, April 28, 1985, was a nightmare. "Our village was being hit by artillery. We had to run to escape death. My children lost their father, their home and their land," she said. "Now we fend for ourselves as refugees."

More than 100,000 people are estimated to have been killed in Lebanon's 11-year civil war. And for many of the survivors, life as internal refugees offers little Christmas cheer.

According to the Catholic Charitable Organisation, Caritas, the sectarian conflict has left at least 50,000 orphans.

Emile Abi Nader, at Beirut's Caritas Information Office, read

out a long list of war statistics. He told Reuters more than 626,000 people lived as refugees in their own country, driven from their ancestral villages, farms and towns by the surge of violence.

Out of a population of some three million, 2.5 million had at one time or another been forced to leave their homes to escape possible death or injury and more than half a million Lebanese had emigrated, he added.

Hundreds of thousands of people still live in deserted buildings, without water or electricity, in old hotels, half-built trade centres and religious institutions, Nader said.

"We are doing our best, but with such figures you can only do so much. We look after about 5,000 of the war orphans ourselves."

One U.N. official told Reuters that Lebanese still living in the country were not considered as refugees, according to the world

body's definition of the term. Lebanon is not considered occupied by a foreign power, but we do help displaced people and try and co-ordinate the efforts of all major relief agencies here," she said.

One aid worker said that with the country divided into innumerable fiefs dominated by armed bands, a joint strategy to assist internal refugees was almost impossible to achieve.

In one run-down building once used as a fashionable restaurant in Christian east Beirut, 13 families shared 100 square metres of floorspace.

Ragged blankets provided meagre privacy. The backyard was used as a lavatory.

Eighty-year-old Samir Tabet said he had great difficulty in finding the money to feed himself and his wife. "Sometimes I collect wood on farms, and mostly I try and find work."

"But it's no good. We can

hardly eat. Charities haven't visited us since last Christmas."

"Our children left Lebanon after we came here. I don't know anything about them," he added, visibly upset. "Sometimes I think we'd prefer to die than continue this way."

Janet Kazzi, 28 and distantly related to Miryeh, said: "We have nothing left. I will teach my children to steal in order to survive."

Twenty-six-year-old Samir joined a militia a year ago — less out of political conviction than to give his family a roof over their heads.

"They made promises, but they lied. My parents and I still sleep in our open truck through the winter, and we didn't even have the money to give my aunt a decent burial when she died in hospital," he said.

Tears streamed down his face. "Please, find us somewhere to live. Help us all to return to our homes."

Israel unfolds own version of U.S.-Iran intrigue

TEL AVIV (AP) — In the first days of spring 1985, then-Prime Minister Shimon Peres listened sympathetically to a visiting American official worried about a CIA station chief kidnapped in Lebanon.

Mr. Peres promised to do what he could.

Over the next 18 months, according to Israeli sources, Mr. Peres shipped U.S. weapons to Iran, sent an aide to Tehran on a secret mission, and took one of the arms dealers into meeting with U.S. President Ronald Reagan.

The complete story is obscured by the silence of the government and many of the Israelis involved. What has emerged, apparently with official approval, supports Israel's contention that it acted only to help the United States and knew nothing of the transfer of proceeds from the Iran deal to Nicaraguan insurgents.

Many questions remain unanswered. But Israel's version of the events that have mired the Reagan administration in its most serious crisis can be pieced together from public comments by people involved, from published reports and from government officials who spoke to the Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

In late March 1985, Michael Ledeen, a former U.S. National Security Council consultant, told Mr. Peres the United States wanted to re-establish contact with Iran, government officials told the AP.

Washington apparently looked to Israel because the Jewish state had maintained a network of ties with Tehran even after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The officials said Mr. Ledeen told Mr. Peres of Mr. Reagan's concern for William Buckley, the CIA station chief kidnapped by pro-Iranian Shi'ite Muslims in Beirut a year earlier.

Hours after speaking with Mr. Ledeen, Mr. Peres talked to Al Schwimmer, the U.S.-born founder of Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), according to Haaretz newspaper. Schwimmer

had become an independent arms dealer after running IAI for 26 years.

It was Schwimmer's idea to barter weapons for Buckley's freedom, and Schwimmer turned for help to Israeli arms dealer Yaakov Nimrodi, according to the paper. Sources said Haaretz based its story on an off-the-record interview with Nimrodi.

Nimrodi was military attaché at Israel's embassy in Iran for 13 years before the fall of the shah in 1979.

Israel Television said Nimrodi contacted Iranian moderates through Saudi Arabian business magnate Adnan Khashoggi and Iranian merchant Manucher Ghorbanifar.

"I was asked to use my broad connections in the world and my acquaintances in Tehran to see if a way exists to bring about the freedom of the American hostages," Nimrodi said in a Nov. 30 statement.

In the summer of 1985, three more Americans were abducted in Beirut, raising to seven the number of U.S. hostages believed held by pro-Iranian militants.

Planning went into high gear in July, when Mr. Peres asked Foreign Minister David Kimche, a former intelligence officer, to coordinate the Israeli team. Kimche acknowledged his role in a television interview on Friday.

In an article published Friday, Nimrodi said he received a letter in July from an Iranian contact saying a powerful pro-Western faction existed in Tehran.

Nimrodi said the unidentified Iranian provided a list of moderates. "If you were to spread (the list) before those who know the intricacies of Iranian politics, it would make them rub their eyes in disbelief," Nimrodi said.

The three Israelis, the Saudi and the Iranian held a negotiating session that July in Hamburg, West Germany. Some reports said they met again in August in London.

With Nimrodi's list of reportedly pro-Western Iranians in hand, Kimche flew to

Washington to clear the deal with then-National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane.

Kimche said he went to the United States "to find out whether and how much the Americans at the highest level wanted to carry out this operation ... the smallest thing that we did, at least as long as I dealt with this subject, was in full coordination with the Americans, and they knew every tiny detail of what we did."

Mr. Reagan has said he did not approve arms deals with Tehran until January 1986, six months after Kimche's trip to Washington.

Ghorbanifar visited Israel in the summer of 1985 and ordered 500 TOW anti-tank missiles and 18 Hawk anti-aircraft missiles, Haaretz reported.

Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin objected to sending the missiles to hostile Iran, Haaretz said, but allowed 100 of them to be delivered on condition that the full \$3.5 million price be paid in advance.

The U.S.-made weapons were taken from Israel's stores and later replaced with new ones from the United States, officials said in interviews. The first shipment left on Aug. 20, followed by two more, Israeli sources said.

On Sept. 14, Presbyterian pastor Benjamin T. Weir was freed after 16 months captivity, surprising American and Israeli officials who expected Buckley's release.

David Jacobsen, freed by Lebanese kidnappers on Nov. 2, 1986, said he believes Buckley died on June 3 of the previous year. American intelligence sources have said he died after torture and medical neglect.

In October 1985, Mr. Peres took Schwimmer to the White House for a visit with Mr. Reagan, sources told the AP. It was not known if they discussed the Iranian deal.

Bargaining for other hostages continued. Government officials confirmed that at some stage, Iran returned a consignment of obsolete weapons and demanded its money back.

Kimche said negotiations reached an impasse in December, but he did not say why.

Mr. Peres assigned his adviser on counterterrorism, Amir Nir, to take over the Israeli end of the operation in January. Mr. Peres also halted the supply of weapons from Israeli stocks and insisted that Israel provide only the logistics for transferring American weapons, Israeli Television said.

Nir was long friendly with Adm. John Poindexter, McFarlane's successor at the National Security Council (NSC), and with Lt-Col. Oliver North, the NSC member running the Iran operation, sources in Israel said.

U.S. officials said a total of 2,008 TOW missiles were sent to Iran for the release of Weir, Rev. Lawrence Martin Jenco on July 26 of this year and of Jacobsen.

The largest shipment arrived on May 28, when, according to reports, 20 plane loads of arms landed in Tehran escorted by Nir, Col. North and Mr. McFarlane. Officials in Israel confirmed to the AP that Nir was aboard.

Israel said ready to swap detainees for soldiers

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel would be prepared to swap prisoners for a soldier, missing since the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, whose family believe he is being held by a Syrian-backed Palestinian group, his father said Sunday.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said last week Israel had hoped to gain the release of Israeli prisoners captured in Lebanon as part of the secret U.S.-arms-to-Iran deal.

Six Israeli soldiers are officially listed as missing in Lebanon, three who disappeared in 1982 and three captured this year.

Yehuda Katz and two fellow soldiers, Zvi Feldman and Zecharia Baumeil, were last seen on June 11, 1982 when their tank apparently fell into Syrian hands during the battle of Sultan Yakub.

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WHAT'S GOING ON

FOR THE TRAVELLER

USEFUL TELEPHONE NOS.

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel: 773111/19	18:30 Music 19:00 Newsdesk 19:30 Date with a Star 20:00 Evening Show 21:00 News Summary 21:05 Evening Show Cont. 22:00 News Summary 22:05 Evening Show Cont. 23:00 News Summary 23:05 Evening Show Cont. 24:00 Close down
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PROGRAMME ONE	15:30 Koran 15:30 Programme review 15:45 Cartoons 16:00 Tom Sawyer 16:25 Traffic Instructions 16:30 Scientific programme (Arabic) 17:00 Return of the Antelope 17:50 Not Another Science Show 18:00 Arabic series 19:00 Local development programme 19:30 Programme on Jordan 19:50 Programme review and varieties 20:00 News in Arabic 20:30 Message from Oman 20:40 Arabic series 21:30 Local literary forum 22:25 Tomorrow's programmes 22:30 Arabic play 23:00 News summary in Arabic 23:10 Play cont.
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PROGRAMME TWO	18:00 Lucien Lauven 19:00 News in French 19:15 Sport magazine (French) 19:30 News in Hebrew 19:45 Fun with Physics 20:00 News in Arabic 20:30 Humanitas (documentary) 21:10 The Count of Monte Cristo (mini series) 22:40 News in English 23:20 Strangers and Brothers
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RADIO JORDAN 855 KHz. AM & 99 MHz. FM & partly on 9360 KHz. SW Tel: 774111-19	18:30 Music 19:00 Newsdesk 19:30 Date with a Star 20:00 Evening Show 21:00 News Summary 21:05 Evening Show Cont. 22:00 News Summary 22:05 Evening Show Cont. 23:00 News Summary 23:05 Evening Show Cont. 24:00 Close down
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VOICE OF AMERICA MW 1260 & SW 7200, 9565, 11740, 11925 and 13210 Hz	05:00 News 05:10 Newsline 5:30 VOA Morning 06:00 News 06:10 Newsline 06:30 VOA Morning 07:00 News 07:10 Newsline 07:30 VOA Morning 08:00 News 08:10 Newsline 08:30 VOA Morning 09:00 News 09:10 VOA Morning 09:30 News Summary 10:00 News 10:10 Newsline 10:30 Music USA 10:40 News 11:00 News 11:30 Special English and Features 11:40 News 11:50 Newsline 12:30 Magazine Show 20:00 News & Features 21:00 News 21:10 Newsline America 21:30 Music USA 22:00 News & Editorial 23:35 Music USA Jazz 23:00 News 23:10 VOA World Report
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TODAY'S EVENTS	Folklore Museum: Jewelry and costumes over 100 years old. Also mosaics from Madaba and Jerash (4th to 18th centuries). The Roman Theatre, Amman. Opening hours: 9.00 a.m. - 5 p.m. Year-round. Tel. 651760. Jordan Archaeological Museum: Has an excellent collection of antiquities of Jordan. Jabal Al Qal'a (Citadel Hill). Opening hours: 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. (Fridays and official holidays 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.). Closed Tuesdays. Jordan National Gallery: Contains a collection of paintings, ceramics, and sculpture by contemporary Islamic artists from most of the Muslim countries and a collection of paintings by 19th Century orientalist artists. Muntazah, Jabal Lweibdeh. Opening hours: 10.00 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m. Closed Tuesdays. Tel. 630128.
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EXHIBITIONS	* An exhibition of architectural paintings of Iraq Al Amir by Francis Larche and Jean-Pierre Lange at the Architecture Gallery — Royal Centre, Jabal Amman (until Jan. 10). * A cultural exhibition by the Islamic charitable society of Hebron (lectures, books, traditional embroidery) at the Royal Cultural Centre (until Dec. 24).
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FEATURE FILM	* "The Wizard of Oz" at 5 p.m. at the American Centre.
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CHURCHES	St. Joseph Church (Roman Catholic) Jabal Amman, Tel. 624590. Church of the Annunciation (Roman Catholic) Jabal Lweibdeh, Tel. 637440. De la Saule Church (Roman Catholic) Jabal Hussein, Tel. 661757. Terzissima Church (Roman Catholic) Jabal Lweibdeh, mass in Italian language, meet every Sunday at 5:30 p.m., Tel. 623366. Church of the Annunciation (Greek Orthodox) Abdal, Tel. 623541. Anglican Church (Church of the Resurrection) Jabal Amman, Tel. 678906. Armenian Catholic Church Ashrafieh, Tel. 771331. Armenian Orthodox Church Ashrafieh, Tel. 775261. St. Ephraim Church (Syrian Orthodox) Ashrafieh, Tel. 771751.
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CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES	* Activities for children at the French Cultural Centre (until Dec. 15).
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SOVIET FILMS	* Soviet film festival at the Soviet Cultural Centre (until Dec. 24).
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CULTURAL CENTRES	Royal Cultural Centre .. Tel. 661026/7 American Centre 644371 American Centre Library 641520 British Council 636147/8 French Cultural Centre 637009 Goethe Institute 641993 Soviet Cultural Centre 644203 Spanish Cultural Centre 624049 Turkish Cultural Centre 639777 Haya Arts Centre 665196 Hussein Youth City 667181/4 Y.W.C.A. 646251 A.Y.M.M.A. 637111 Yunnan Municipal Library 843555 University of Jordan Library 843555
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PRAYER TIMES	05:02 Fajr 06:29 (Sunrise) Duha 11:51 Dhur 14:35 'Asr 16:32 Maghreb 17:39 Isha
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QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	This information is supplied by The Royal Jordanian Information Department at the Queen Alia International Airport tel. (08) 53200-5, where it should always be verified.
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ARRIVALS	ROYAL JORDANIAN FLIGHTS (Terminal 1) 09:00 Agaba (RJ) 09:20 Cairo (CA) 09:25 Jeddah (RJ) 09:30 Muscat, Dubai (RJ) 09:30 Damascus (RJ) 10:00 Abu Dhabi, Kuwait (RJ) 10:00 London (RJ) 10:00 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ) 10:45 Bangkok (RJ) 10:50 Baghdad (RJ)
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OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)	07:35 Cairo (MS) 09:20 Sana'a (LF) 13:45 Kuwait (KU) 18:25 Beirut (ME) 18:30 Baghdad (IA)
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DEPARTURES	ROYAL JORDANIAN FLIGHTS (Terminal 1) 06:45 Agaba (RJ) 11:30 Paris (RJ) 11:45 Vienna, Chicago, Los Angeles (RJ)
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OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)	12:15 Frankfurt, Copenhagen (RJ) 13:00 Larnaca (RJ) 13:20 Cairo (RJ) 20:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ) 20:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ) 21:00 Kuwait, Dammam (RJ) 21:00 Baghdad (RJ) 21:15 Jeddah (RJ) 21:15 Cairo (RJ)
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WEATHER	Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology. Clouds will appear at different altitudes, with southwesterly moderate winds. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and calm sea. Amman 3/14 Aqaba 10/21 Deserts 2/15 Jordan Valley 11/25
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YESTERDAY'S HIGH TEMPERATURES:	Amman 14, Aqaba 20.6. Humidity readings: Amman 53 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.
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EMERGENCIES	Amman governorate 891228 Amman civil defence 198, 199 Civil Defence (trib) 271393, 273131 Civil Defence Qweisneh 770733 Civil Defence Deir Alla 57306 Ambulance 193, 775111 Amman downtown fire brigade 198 First aid 630341 Blood bank 776303 Civil Defence rescue 661111 Fire headquarters 622223 Police rescue 193, 631111, 637777 Police headquarters 639141 Traffic police 896390/1 Electric Power Co. 636381/4, 624881 Municipal water complaints 771125/8 Queen Alia Int. Airport (08) 53306/0
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NIGHT DUTY	AMMAN: Dr. Joseph Mershi 770560 Dr. Bahjat Bader 893362 Salim pharmacy 636730 Sahab pharmacy 668056 Netroukh pharmacy 623672 Firas pharmacy 661912 Hinnawi pharmacy 845376 Khalil pharmacy 778653
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TAXIS:	Khalil taxi 623715 Jerusalem taxi 639655 Hebron taxi 776100 Bezzan taxi 892433 Mir'ab taxi 896624 Al-Saleh taxi 773093 Seysha taxi 64819 Kurdi taxi 847572
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IRBID:	Dr. Abdul Rahim Mabarka 244557 Halabi pharmacy (—) Nabulsi pharmacy (—)
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ZARQA:	Dr. Neshi al Ammani 985721 Hawroz pharmacy (—) Alhaya pharmacy (—)
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GENERAL	Jordan Television 773111/19 Radio Jordan 774111/19 Ministry of Tourism 643311 Hotel complaints 666412 Price complaints 661176 Telephone information 12 Jordan and Middle East calls 10 Overseas calls 17 Repair services 11
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MARKET PRICES	Upper/lower price in ffs per kg. Apple (double red and golden) 90/ 70 Lemon 90/ 60 Malt 130/ 100 Malt 130/ 100 Malt 130
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MARKET PRICES	Upper/lower price in ffs per kg. Apple (double red and golden) 90/ 70 Lemon 90/ 60 Malt 130/ 100 Malt 130/ 100 Malt 130
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Distinguished effort

WE JOIN the people and government of Jordan in welcoming the honourable members of the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (ICHI) which is holding its seventh and final session here in Amman. We take a special pride in the fact that the commission is co-chaired by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and His Highness Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, both of whom are sons of the Middle East and each in his own right a recognised authority on humanitarian concerns. Lest we in this part of the world forget, it was Crown Prince Hassan who first submitted the proposition of establishing a new humanitarian order back in 1981 with a view to give humanitarian issues the same level of concern which is accorded to other human endeavours.

Since the inception of its driving philosophy in 1981, and its formal adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations as a living and guiding resolution by which the international community may recognise and examine the specific humanitarian issues which have hitherto been denied adequate scrutiny and effective remedies, much has already been accomplished by the commission.

Since its first plenary meeting the commission has been able to identify opportunities for more effective action within the scope of its mandate and to submit action-oriented proposals to policy-makers for the promotion of its humanitarian mission. This the commission did with a view to address human needs, wants and aspirations. To paraphrase the words of Crown Prince Hassan in this context, the execution of future policies shall be conducted on the proposition that human beings matter. Foremost among the commission's multi-dimensional concerns has been its active encouragement of states to observe more fully the letter as well as the spirit of existing international conventions on armed conflicts and its concerted efforts to deal and cope with new issues emerging from armed conflicts.

Clearly nuclear weapons and the ramifications and implications of their use are uppermost on the minds of the members of the commission. Nuclear winters and the threats to life on planet earth which could ensue from a nuclear war or even from peaceful uses of nuclear energy, have not escaped the attention of the commission. Also, disasters, whether natural or man-made, come clearly within the scope of the commission's mandate. Under this heading falls the disastrous flood crisis in Africa. Here we are happy to note the apolitical and action-oriented measures that Jordan has been undertaking in air-lifted emergency food and medical supplies to the Sudanese people in the course of this year, over and above our continued support to the Sudanese infrastructure in the domain of agriculture.

Last, but not least, the plight of the weak and powerless among the human race has not escaped the concern and attention of the commission either. To name but a few, the stateless, the disappeared, the refugees and displaced persons have been dealt with in a pragmatic and innovative manner in order to identify the problems of each group and offer effective remedies to their plights and agonies.

When the members of the commission, all of whom are internationally distinguished and renowned for their highest intellectual excellence and ideals, conclude their meetings during this session and issue their final report, the targeted audience of the report shall of course be the governments and peoples of the world. Its projected contributions shall be the new openings and avenues which have yet to be explored by man to make him and his welfare, and survivability with dignity, the centre of all human pursuits and endeavours.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: King points to the danger

KING HUSSEIN delivered an address to the Royal Command and Staff Academy Saturday, frankly outlining the situation in the Arab World and urging Arab leaders to rise above their differences and meet to discuss their problems and ways of reestablishing solidarity among their countries. The King was frank in pinpointing the responsibility which he said falls squarely on Arab leaders and not the Arab masses who do not differ on anything. The monarch also was careful to warn the Arab leaders of the danger that threatens the whole Arab order, making it clear that no Arab country will escape from danger resulting from continued differences and divisions and from external aggression. It is these differences that encouraged the United States and other countries to openly give little attention to the Arabs and to pursue their hostile attitude towards them. It is these differences and divisions that have prevented the Arab leaders from halting the civil strife in Lebanon and ending Iran's aggression on Iraq and Israel's continued arbitrary measures against the Arab people of Palestine. In total frankness we say that the Arab leaderships are exposing themselves to real danger by failing to take action for ending differences and failing to shoulder their national responsibilities. They should realise that Washington's disregard of the Arabs in their dealings with Iran and Israel's continued criminal and terrorist actions in the occupied territories are bound to continue unless meaningful actions are taken by these leaderships.

Al Dstour: King diagnoses nation's ills

KING HUSSEIN Saturday diagnosed the ills of the Arab Nation and pointed to the remedy. He called on Arab heads of state to forego their differences and embark on meaningful action to save their nation. In calling on the Arab leaders to convene a summit meeting and join hands in confronting their enemies, King Hussein is clearly acting in accordance to the principles of the Great Arab Revolt and aiming to achieve its objectives. That revolt and its principles aimed primarily at liberating the Arabs and at uniting their countries. At present, the Arab order is being exposed to a cruel experience and the Arab masses are facing hardships and aggression in Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq. Jordan is one of the Arab countries that has realised the dimension of these dangers that threaten us all, and the bitterness in the King's address to the Royal Command and Staff Academy reflected Jordan's keenness on seeing concerted Arab action to deal with this pitiable situation. We see in King Hussein's call on Arab leaders to meet together and work out plans for safeguarding their nation as the only way out of the present dilemma. Jordan calls for the summit meeting which would draw up plans for the Arab Nation to liberate its usurped land and to fend off aggression. In King Hussein's words there was a clear warning that if the Arab order collapses then no one will escape the ultimate danger.

Sawt Al Shaab: King sends open message

KING HUSSEIN'S address to the Royal Command and Staff Academy was an open message to the Arab Nation at large and to Arab leaders in particular. The monarch called on the Arab heads of state to be aware of the dangers that threaten the Arab order and take action in the face of the present hostile attitude of external powers and the enemies of the Arab Nation. The King was careful to point to the ills of the Arab Nation and to define the remedy that can help the Arabs end the state of divisions and disunity among them. He called on Arab leaders to rise above the level of differences and divisions and join hands for meaningful action that can save their nation. The King said that Arab differences have been instrumental in delaying any joint action to deal with the on-going war in the Gulf, the civil strife in Lebanon and the continued Israeli arbitrary measures against the Palestinian people. It is these differences that caused Iraq to remain alone fighting the Iranian aggressors for more than six years and left the Palestinian people facing their ordeal and the Israeli occupation for 20 years. These and the continued fighting in Lebanon reflect the indifference on the part of the Arab leaders to the serious developments in their region and the rising violence and the loss of life.

The question of minorities: Many accusations, no easy way out

By Dr. Waleed Sa'di

ON the 38th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which fell on Dec. 10, one becomes a bit more aware of the multi-dimensions of human rights and his or her attention focuses on the particular and special dimension of those rights which is peculiar to his or her own situation. In the Arab World, there is seldom sufficient reference to minority rights in view of the fact that the Arabs, people and governments, are renowned for their religious and ethnic tolerances. But in the world at large, the subject of protection of minorities rights receives wide attention and has assumed an ever increasing relevancy in view of the dislocations between peoples and the reorganisation of states both in shape and composition at the turn of the 20th century. The contemporary phenomenon of mass migration of individuals from one country into another in search for freedom and economic opportunities has also accentuated this problem of minority rights worldwide. In fact this particular aspect of human rights is so important that there is a special U.N. Committee called the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. As practically all countries in the world have minorities among their respective societies, it would be pertinent on this 38th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to review this dimension of human rights and examine it for our purposes, in the light of the Bulgarian experiment and experience. The Bulgarian case is most pertinent to us in the Arab World as it touches on the rights of the Muslim minorities in that country whether they are of Bulgarian or Turkish origin.

Bulgaria, as is well known, is a country of approximately 9 million inhabitants with two major ethnic minorities, namely, ethnic Turks which number about 900,000 and gypsies which number about 400,000, and one religious minority, Muslims. Muslims in Bulgaria are either indigenous Bulgarians, gypsies or ethnic Turks. The Macedonians are slavic people who live in the southwestern regions of the country and number about 200,000. Bulgaria has maintained all along that the Macedonians are ethnic Bulgarians and have been treated as such.

To put this writing in proper legal perspective, it would be necessary to refer to relevant national and international laws. To begin with, the constitution of Bulgaria prescribes as per article 35 that equality between citizens shall be observed, and the prevention and prohibition of discrimination on the basis of, inter alia, origin, creed, and race is well rooted. Article 45 of the constitution also accords Bulgarian citizens of non-Bulgarian origin the right to study their own language in addition to the compulsory study of the Bulgarian language.

Internationally speaking, article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibits distinctions between persons on the basis, inter alia, of race, religion or ethnic origin. The provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Bulgaria was among the pioneer countries to ratify, is also clear and strong on the issue of discrimination. In article 1 of the said covenant, it is prescribed that all peoples have the right to self-determination and accordingly shall have the right to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. Article 2 of the covenant also prohibits discrimination on the basis, inter alia, of race, religion or national origin. Article 27 of the same covenant addresses itself specifically to the issue of minorities and states that in those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of their groups, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language. Likewise, the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, which was ratified by Bulgaria on August 8, 1966, also prohibits discrimination or distinction or preference on the basis of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. Paragraph 4 of Article 1 of that convention calls for special measures to secure the advancement of certain racial or ethnic groups or individuals requiring such protection, provided that such measures do not, as a consequence, lead to the maintenance of separate rights for different racial groups. This is a run down of the laws, national as well as international, which Bulgaria is bound to observe and respect with regard to the minorities that exist within its borders. Any judgment

for or against that country must, of course, be dependent on whether it has fulfilled its treaty and national laws obligations vis-a-vis its minorities.

The most critical issue is of course the issue of facts as they relate to the Bulgarian experience and experiment with the matter or subject of minorities. There is no way to establish the veracity of the allegations or rebuttals except through an independent machinery which is acceptable to that country. But before we can go into this phase of our analysis, let's review the reports which have been accumulated on Bulgaria with regard to its ethnic and religious minorities. Certainly from the point of view of the Bulgarian government the reports to be referred to are mere allegations. To interested parties and states, the reports are deemed well corroborated and established.

The reports subject of this writing speak of forced assimilation having been perpetrated against ethnic Turks and Bulgarian Muslims. This forced assimilation, it is reported, often assumed the form of applying pressure and heavy-handed policies to make the ethnic and religious minorities change their Muslim names to Bulgarian ones. One of the reports talks of troops having been used in the village of Dolni Voden near the city of Asenograd, to affect the name changing. It appears, according to these reports, that the campaign to forcibly change the Muslim names started in late 1984. There were instances, the reports indicate, where individuals had freely changed their names but that the overwhelming majority did so under duress, sometimes taking the form of military operation. The campaign, the reports assert, was launched under the banner of Bulgaria a one-nation state and that resisters to this campaign were arrested and detained under police custody. Amnesty International asserts that they have the names of over 100 ethnic Turks who were allegedly killed by the security forces during the implementation of the campaign. Other reports speak of banishment to other regions of Bulgaria of those who resisted the name changing.

In the domain of religious intolerance, these reports indicate that, while the Bulgarian Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and religion, religious officials are paid by the state and are presumed to conduct their religious affairs in harmony with state policy. But the same reports confirm that while some mosques were closed down, the majority of them are still open and functioning. Restrictions on some religious practices have also been the subject of scrutiny and the filtered out reports from Bulgaria speak of prohibitions being applied on the circumcision of male infants. But these reports speak of prohibitions only against performing the surgical act of circumcision outside a medical clinic. Other reports speak of prohibitions being applied in Bulgaria against the wearing of the *Shalvari* and the speaking of Turkish in public places. As for the Bulgarian Muslims, the reports assert that the campaign to change their names from Islamic to Bulgarian ones had occurred a long time ago and may have taken place back in 1971-73 with little or no outcry from any outside source.

All in all these reports when confirmed would suggest that Bulgaria has sought to homogenise its population by duress. The crux of the matter in the final analysis is the veracity of the reports which speak of the application of raw force and duress in all its forms. As these reports have ramifications and implications of far reaching dimensions some of which even touch upon the basic and primary rights of the minorities in Bulgaria, it would seem to be in order to clarify the issues of facts once and for all by an independent machinery, preferably a U.N. machinery. There are several avenues open for such a task and it should not be too difficult to agree on such a machinery. Bulgaria as well as her friends from the Arab and Islamic nations of the world stand to gain a lot in terms of better relations once the facts are verified, fully aired out and settled. This lingering sour issue of how the Muslims of Bulgaria have been treated must not be allowed to fester for much longer. As Bulgaria refuted all the reports about its mistreatment of its minorities, it would be in order to allow for a mechanism to set the record straight and to redress whatever wrong doing had been perpetrated. The road of truth would serve the interests of all parties, even if the truth reveals and exposes grave mistakes. The time is not too late for the Muslim nations of the world to call on Bulgaria to help the world establish the facts once and for all and to appeal to her thereafter to redress whatever act of discrimination that may have perpetrated against the Muslims of Bulgaria.

Greek composer campaigns for friendship with Turkey

By Kerin Hope
The Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece — Composer Mikis Theodorakis, of "Zorba the Greek" fame, has plunged into politics again with a plan for artists and writers from Greece and Turkey to promote a reconciliation between the two warring allies.

Theodorakis, a former Communist parliamentarian, in November founded a Greek-Turkish friendship committee backed by prominent intellectuals in both countries.

To launch the project, the burly, 61-year-old musician conducted four sell-out concerts in Istanbul, where enthusiastic Turkish audiences gave him a standing ovation.

"People's response to the concerts we gave was beyond all my expectations. So was the reaction there to our committee's proclamation," Theodorakis told the Associated Press.

He said the 20-member committee will join with a counterpart organisation in

Turkey to stage conferences and theatrical and musical events in both countries starting in early 1987.

"The joint purpose is to contribute to rapprochement and development of friendship between our two peoples. We believe this will contribute to establishing peace between our countries and in the region," Theodorakis said.

The plan was welcomed by Turkish Premier Turgut Ozal, who praised Theodorakis for trying "to bring nations closer." But Greece's Socialist government criticised the energetic, outspoken composer for meddling in the country's biggest foreign policy problem.

Although Greece and Turkey are allies in NATO, they are at odds in disputes over the Mediterranean island of Cyprus and Aegean Sea airspace and undersea oil deposits.

Greece also fears that Turkey covets the eastern Greek islands lying close to the Turkish Aegean coast.

Premier Andreas Papandreu

rejects Ozal's overtures for cooperation on trade and tourism, saying that Turkey is a bigger military threat to Greece than the Warsaw pact countries.

Asked to comment on Theodorakis' plan, Greek government spokesman Antonis Kouris said: "Mikis Theodorakis has reached the limits of absurdity."

Theodorakis persuaded both leftists and conservatives to join the friendship committee, including Communist poet Yiannis Ritsos, singer Maria Farantouri, composer Stavros Xarhakos and Nikos Delipetros, a senior official in former conservative governments.

In Turkey, more than 30 cultural personalities have pledged support for the project. Among them are internationally known novelists Yasar Kemal and Aziz Nesin, columnist Ali Sirmen and composer Zulfu Livaneli.

"We believe that the Turkish and Greek peoples have no unsolvable problems in the framework of the U.N. charter, provided they respect each other's

territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence," Sirmen said in Istanbul.

Sirmen said the Turkish-Greek friendship committee will be officially founded later in December.

Theodorakis resigned from parliament last April after 4½ years as a Greek Communist Party (KKE) deputy for Athens' port of Piraeus, complaining his presence there had become "pointless."

He says he has "definitely abandoned" party politics to devote himself to Greece's "major national issues."

Theodorakis wants to help eradicate traditional Greek feelings of hostility toward Turkey, which originated during 400 years of Ottoman Turkish rule over Greece.

"There were times when our countries were at war. But there were long periods when our peoples co-existed peacefully and that had a significant effect in the cultural sector," he said.

Theodorakis often pays tribute to the influence of Turkish musical traditions on Greek folk music.

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Christmas celebrations — similarities and differences around the world

By Josephine Zananiri
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "Christmas is coming and the goose is getting fat", chant the lines of an old children's rhyme. Fortunately for the goose, the turkey is now the favoured Christmas dish. Along with the goose, many Christmas traditions have changed or faded out of existence and new ones emerged. However, throughout the world, the variety of Yuletide celebrations, although sharing common features, is as great as the number of Christian ethnic groups.

France

France has two Christmas traditions says Madame Marie-Alice Leclercq, wife of the French ambassador. "The North follows the German and Anglo-Saxon customs with Santa Claus, the Christmas tree and a turkey lunch. In the South, with its Mediterranean influence, there is traditionally no Christmas tree and the manger with small figurines representing the birth of Christ is the dominant Christmas manifestation. Throughout the South of France for one month prior to the feast, markets sell the clay figures which are very beautiful," explains Mme. Leclercq, "as they are hand made and hand painted."

"In France," she continues, "we are fond of eating," and consequently a French Christmas is sumptuous. "In the North, the traditional feast is turkey, oysters and the buche de Noel — a cake rolled into a log shape. In the South, the traditional lunch is 'oysters and sea food followed by twelve deserts which are not cakes but dried fruits such as dates, apricots, and raisins as well as fresh fruit of the season and nuts."

"Traditionally, the French go to church at midnight after the adults eat supper and open their Christmas presents. For the children, gift opening is on Christmas morning," adds Mme. Leclercq. "We don't have a great deal of public Christmas decorations. However, people dress up in their choicest clothes," she explains.

Canada

"Canadian Christmas is an adaptation of the traditions brought by the people who settled there," says Canadian Ambassador Gary Harman. "Canada is usually covered in a blanket of snow," adds the ambassador, "and people take advantage of the traditional atmosphere. We have the usual customs of gift giving, Santa Claus and the Christmas tree, common to most North and Central European countries."

In Ottawa, the Canadian capital, "two huge Christmas trees are erected outside the parliament building. Both are decorated with coloured lights as well as bangles, and when the snow falls on the trees the effect is quite memorable. A Canadian Christmas lunch is typically turkey although there are variations," says the ambassador.

England

English Christmas traditions are probably the most widespread in the world. Mrs. Anne Coles, wife of the British ambassador, describes customs which are familiar to us all.

"Children open the presents left by Santa on Christmas morning," she explains, and later the family attends church service. Christmas lunch is roast turkey with chestnut stuffing. Surrounding the turkey are small sausages and rolls of bacon. Vegetables include potatoes and brussels sprouts and the meal is served with bread sauce and gravy. The second course includes the famous plum pudding, which is brought to the dinner table in flames and decorated with a sprig of holly. "Inside the pudding are small silver charms or coins," adds the ambassador's wife. "The pudding is served with brandy sauce and mince pies are also placed on the table. Decorations on the Christmas table must include, nuts, a bowl of fruit, red candles and crackers — round paper objects which when pulled apart reveal a small present."

"After lunch the English listen to the Queen's Christmas message on radio or television," says Mrs. Coles. Christmas day is very much a time for the family to get together and so the afternoon is taken up with catching up on family news. Later in the day, the other English favourite, the Christmas cake — a rich concoction of nuts, dried fruit and lavish quantities of eggs buttered and so on is eaten. The cake is covered with a thick layer of white sugar icing, "representing the snow," Mrs. Coles points out.

While Christmas for the English remains very much a family affair for the foreign visitor it is the public gaiety of the occasion

which is most memorable. "We are best known for our Christmas decorations," says the ambassador's wife. Thousands of lights and decorations are put up before Christmas and carol singers always appear on the streets."

Germany

The imagery of German Christmas is one of snow covered Bavarian cottages and forests, bustling Christmas markets and carol singers with cheeks pink from the crisp evening flecks of snow. "Well it doesn't always snow," comments Mr. Alfred Protz, first secretary of the embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany. "However," he adds, "it is not considered a proper Christmas without snow."

"For the Germans, Christmas is a family affair spent with close relatives. On the eve of the feast, around six or seven o'clock, the children leave the living room and the parents decorate the Christmas tree and place presents underneath it. The gifts are not left by Santa Claus (who arrives in Germany in early December)," explains the diplomat, "but by the Christkind, a sort of little angel figure."

"Every one gathers around the Christmas tree," continues Mr. Protz, "and sings carols before opening presents. Later in the evening, many people attend church or midnight mass." Christmas food varies greatly through Germany, says Mr. Protz, but the traditional lunch is goose or turkey. The traditional cake is the *Lebkuchen* — a spicy cake sweetened with honey.

"Decorations are simple," adds Mr. Protz. "The Christmas tree is decorated with lights, tinsel, and small figurines. On the eve of the feast, the children leave the living room and the parents decorate the Christmas tree and place presents underneath it. The gifts are not left by Santa Claus (who arrives in Germany in early December)," explains the diplomat, "but by the Christkind, a sort of little angel figure."

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Egypt

For the Egyptian Copts, Christmas is a festive time for all the family too. "A bachelor, even if he is working far from his family, will return to celebrate the eid," says Dr. Sa'ad El Fayoumy, who is at present in Jordan establishing a Masters course in business administration at the University of Jordan.

"The Copts," he points out, "celebrate Christmas on January 7, according to the Eastern calendar." The traditional present for the eid is a "new suit of clothes," adds the doctor's wife Joanne. Children are taken to the shops and, "are bought everything new from the skin out." The adults too purchase new clothes and housewives, "clean the home until it sparkles," adds Joanne El Fayoumy.

"Christmas for the Copts is a deeply religious time," she explains, and the feast, "ends 43 days of totally vegetarian fasting." Before breaking their fast, most Copts attend midnight church services. On returning home they feast on vegetables stuffed with meat, vine leaves, and a sumptuous variety of cooked foods, explain the Fayoumys.

As Coptic families celebrate the eid together, the women of the clan start cooking the Christmas lunch after a breakfast of *kaiak* and pound cake rich in butter and eggs. The festive lunch is eaten around 4 o'clock says Dr. El Fayoumy and usually includes turkey, stuffed pigeons, an array of stuffed vegetables followed by puddings and cakes.

Homes were not traditionally decorated in the Western mode but, "flowers from the bounty of the Nile covered the house." On Christmas day families visit each other, "the streets are crowded with people moving to each others homes, children blowing whistles and balloons. It is a very joyous time and a very active one," concludes Dr. El Fayoumy.

Lebanon

The festive formalities of Lebanon are relatively recent, explains Lebanese historian and writer Dr. Kamal Salibi. As a Protestant child growing up in Bhandouna, he remembers, "Christmas celebrated in the Western style, complete with the Christmas tree, presents and the traditional turkey lunch." However, until the French entered Lebanon, Christmas remained a secondary eid to Easter which dominates the Eastern Churches.

Many of the traditional feasts of the Advent season such as the New Year's *Bostrena* (in which the first person to greet the other, received a gift), are now eclipsed by the Western concept of



Christmas, adds Dr. Salibi. In another charming Lebanese custom, on the 12th day of Christmas, small bags of leavening were hung from any tree except the mulberry tree. The angel Gabriel was thought to pass and all trees bowed except the mulberry tree. "The bread was baked on the evening of the 12th day," says the historian.

Lebanese Christmas is a festive time with many traditions. "In September," says Mrs. Maries Attalah, president of the British women's organisation in Amman, "we start making it a family affair with all the females participating. We make three cakes, one for the poor, one which is given to the poor." Three puddings, moist breads and stuffed with mince are also baked. "One was kept and two given to the poor," says Mrs. Attalah. "On the morning after Christmas, many Irish people eat the cold pudding fried in butter for breakfast."

"Christmas lunch was generally turkey stuffed with breadcrumbs, sage and parsley stuffing and preceded by a starter such as fresh Irish salmon," says Mrs. Attalah. Decorations include the Christmas tree and the manger which in Mrs. Attalah's childhood were made with paper or cardboard and upgraded naturally with the child's artistic development. "In my childhood,

Ireland

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the house was decorated with lots of paper chains, in orange, red, green and so on. Sometimes we even used them in the bedrooms," she adds. Another essential part of Christmas in Ireland is the midwinter. "It was inconspicuously pinned to the ceiling," she recalls, and those caught underneath stole a kiss."

Irish tradition holds Christmas day to be held at home, however on Boxing day, says Mrs. Attalah, people took a brisk walk to the local church, where they prayed and gave money to the poor. On returning home, they had tea of mince pies and Christmas cake. "Those were the days when people ate a lot," she quips in her soft Irish brogue.

America

American Christmas is as varied as the ethnic groups composing the States," says Dr. Rick

Roberts, the director of programmes at the U.S.I.S. centre. "The Christmas experience ranges from the austere religious to the totally joyful." In Mississippi, where Dr. Roberts grew up, there is no snow so Christmas took on a more outdoor character. "We drove around looking at the festivities," he remembers, "the outdoor mangers, the lights, Christmas trees, even live tableaux of the nativity were performed," he adds.

Cities and towns in America decorate their public areas. "Time Square," says Dr. Roberts, "is very festive," and New York families like those across the nation stroll around enjoying the Christmas spirit, he adds.

America's most spectacular Christmas decoration is, "a huge Christmas tree erected every year in Washington. A different state donates the tree each year," explains Dr. Roberts, "and it is decorated by gifts from across the nation. Placed around the large tree are fifty smaller ones representing the states of America," he adds.

Christmas lunch varies according to the family tradition says the programme director. "Some families have turkey for Thanksgiving and ham for Christmas, others have turkey for both feasts. The plum pudding is sometimes eaten although I was familiar with egg nog," comments Dr. Roberts.

Greece

Greek Christmas is a time of festivities and religious observances. "On the 24th groups of children move around the town or village singing *kallanda* (carols)," says Mr. Michael Koukakis, first secretary of the Greek embassy. "The ancient songs sometimes dated from the Fifth or Sixth Centuries of the Byzantine era are sung on Christmas and New Year's eve and on the night before the Epiphany."

Traditionally, the Greeks did not have a Christmas tree as part of their celebrations," explains Mr. Koukakis, "but a boat or ship made of paper or cardboard and covered in the colours of the Greek flag."

The church plays a significant role in the festive season and many celebrations include religious ceremonies. On January 6, says Mr. Koukakis, "we have a feast

called, dipping the cross. It is performed in the coastal areas or near lakes and rivers by the highest ranking priest in each district. He throws a cross into the lake or sea and all the men dive into the freezing water to try to retrieve it. In Piraeus, the ceremony is attended by everyone from the president of the republic down," he adds.

"On January 1st we have a custom called the *bonouna*. The one who enters the house first, sets the luck for the following year. So we try to have a child cross the threshold first. All the children who come into the home are given a small amount of money."

Greek Christmas lunch usually consists of roast turkey stuffed with spiced rice and raisins, sometimes pork and always lots of irresistible cakes, says the Greek diplomat, including *Christopsomo*, a special bread with sesame and many small cakes dipped in honey syrup and sprinkled in fine sugar.

Ghana

Many Europeans, even Arab Christians, must have pondered that special heresy of how pleasant snow, frost, and ice free Christmas must be. Well in Africa it is dancing and feasting explains Prosper Ramos Komla from Ghana. "Our Christmas traditions are based on the colonial past. At midnight we pray in church however then we go to the disco."

"Christmas day is a family time and although there are no traditional foods," explains Mr. Komla, "we generally cook something special. The children are allowed to select the delicacy, chicken, goat, or lamb and the meal takes on a festive air. The youngsters are also given a new suit of clothing and Santa Claus makes an appearance too," he adds.

The use of Christmas decorations says Mr. Komla is dependent on the individual family and whether they can afford the imported baubles.

There are no distinctions between Muslims and Christians in Ghana, says the young journalist and, "Christians invite Muslim friends to Christmas and Easter celebrations and Muslims reciprocate at their feasts."

Chile

Chile's Christmas is of course in

summer with 30 degrees temperatures. "Most Chileans carry on the customs of their European forefathers," says Alberto Yocham, first secretary at the embassy of Chile. "However," he quips, "Santa doesn't look too well in heavy clothes in such temperatures."

Christmas is a family affair in Chile too. "On New Year's eve people go out but Christmas is spent with the family," he remarks. "Houses are decorated with Christmas trees, wreaths and the traditional manger," he adds, and "lunch consists of turkey, potatoes, and salads. In the afternoon, Chileans can hardly gather round the fire place," says Mr. Yocham, "so many people rush to the beach."

Australia

And the final word on Christmas tradition from the least traditional — the Australians. Mr. Terry Goggin, Australian ambassador says, "when I was growing up we had enormous hot dinners in the middle of the day, now it is turkey on the beach. You eat, get a bit sun burnt and have a swim. Christmas is now much more informal and people are using the weather sensibly."

Like the international Christmas fare, Australians eat turkey for their celebratory lunch but often it is cold and accompanied by salads. Decorations are in the English tradition. Mr. Goggin comments with a twinkle, "most Australians have a Christmas tree in their living room with cotton wool representing snow dotted over it, even though the temperature outside is over 30 degrees."

Australian city and town centres are decorated for the festive season. "In Sydney," says Mr. Goggin, "the main shopping district is lavished in lights and decorations, a huge Christmas tree is the centre of attraction." Many churches hold evenings of carol singing and in general church attendance rises," adds the ambassador.

"Christmas," he explains, "has an added festive air in Australia as the long summer vacation for schools starts in December and many industries close for their annual vacation during January, so Christmas marks the beginning of the holiday season."

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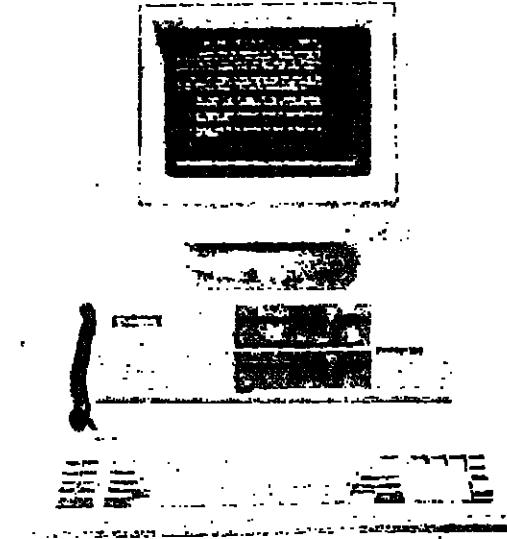
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HOTEL JORDAN INTER-CONTINENTAL

The eternal magic of Bethlehem

By Ara Voskian

Special to the Jordan Times

ONLY 12 kilometres away from the Old City of Jerusalem lies the historic town of Bethlehem where there is one of the most important Christian holy places in the world, the Church of the Nativity, which covers the grotto where Jesus Christ was born.

Bethlehem, with a population of more than 16,000, is located on the crest of the eastward slope of the central Palestine plateau and is one of the oldest cities in Palestine.

Eventful history

This birth place of Jesus was a Philistine garrison city which was raised to the ground by the Roman Emperor Hadrian in 132 A.D. most probably because it had gradually transformed into a Christian shrine.

Bethlehem remained virtually non-existent until the Christian Roman emperor Constantine I erected a basilica there, about 330 A.D. The basilica was named the Church of Saint Mary, thereby reviving interest in the birth place of Jesus.

The basilica was restored during the reign of the Roman emperor Justinian I who ruled from 527 to 565 A.D. Thereafter the edifice was called the Church of the

Nativity. Since then, Bethlehem was ruled by the Persians the Arabs, the Crusaders and then the Turks until the Ottoman Turks took possession of Palestine in 1571 and remained in control until the end of World War I when the Holy Land became part of the British mandate. All during this time the Church of the Nativity was not harmed and the town was not harmed and the town was spared from attacks.

In 1947, when the United Nations drew the plan to partition Palestine, it was proposed that Jerusalem be put under U.N. control. Had this plan materialised, Bethlehem would have been included within the boundaries of the U.N.-controlled Jerusalem. But this plan was shelved because of the war in 1948 after which Bethlehem remained under Jordan until it was occupied by the Israelis during the 1967 war.

Through these years Bethlehem became a major tourist attraction, especially during the Christmas festivities when thousands of pilgrims from all around the world arrive to make their pilgrimage during the celebrations of the Birth of Jesus. Therefore, tourism is the most important aspect in the lives of the inhabitants, including a large number of craftsmen who thrive by making souvenirs that are sold to the thousands of tourists and pilgrims.

Traditions maintained

Christmas celebrations start on the morning of Dec. 24 every year when the Roman Catholic patriarch of Jerusalem at the head of a huge procession launches the 12-kilometre journey to Bethlehem where thousands of pilgrims who usually arrive early in the morning to await, at the vast ground outside the Church of the Nativity, his arrival.

Bethlehem's inhabitants would have already made their preliminary contribution for the creation of the magical aura that prevails over the town throughout the Christmas celebrations, by decorating the town, especially the area in front of the church with thousands of flags and multi-coloured lights, putting up a big Christmas tree outside the church and installing a large number of loudspeakers on the walls.

Upon arrival at the ground outside the church, the patriarch and the accompanying procession are usually met by the mayor of Bethlehem and other dignitaries of the town. Together with all the clergymen and the pilgrims the procession enters the Church of the Nativity singing religious hymns. This marks the beginning of Bethlehem's Christmas celebrations.

The procession enters through the small, one-metre high, main

entrance of the church. It is said that the entrance of the church was made so small so that the pilgrims, who in the old days used to come from far away places, would not bring their beasts of burden with them inside the church. Others say that the entrance was made small to remind the pilgrims to show their respect by bowing while entering the holy place. Whatever the reason is, two things are certain: pilgrims definitely bow while entering the church and there is no way a beast of burden can enter through such a small entrance.

Charismatic combination

One day before Christmas carols can be heard all over the town through the loudspeakers. Souvenir shops, restaurants and cafes are busy, trying their utmost to satisfy the thousands of visitors.

The Bethlehemites have never failed to extend their hospitality, which, combined with the history of the place, the beauty of its geographical position and the idea behind Christmas, brings about the magic behind the celebrations in Bethlehem.

By nightfall thousands of flood lights around the city illuminate its streets which are alive with visitors and pilgrims awaiting for the start of the midnight mass which starts at 12 p.m.

There has always been joy in Bethlehem during Christmas celebrations, and there will still be joy in Bethlehem despite the Israeli occupation, despite the enormous economic and political problems that the inhabitants face everyday of the year while under occupation, and despite the long and irritating physical searches by Israeli soldiers that one has to undergo before entering the church compound.

Celebrations again

After the Christmas celebration of the Roman Catholics, Bethlehem prepares for another celebration, this time with the Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Church celebrates Christmas on Jan. 6 according to the New Orthodox Calendar. This time Bethlehem welcomes the Greek patriarch and the city is alive again.

Thirteen days after this, on Jan. 18, Bethlehem celebrates Christmas for the third time, this time with the Armenians who celebrate Christmas according to the Old Orthodox Calendar. Bethlehem mayor welcomes the Armenian patriarch and his procession from Jerusalem and for the third time the town is alive. Burning lights illuminate the city shops, cafes and restaurants are full of visitors, and Christmas carols are heard all around the city.

The intensity of Bethlehem's magic has retained its charisma through all these years.



General view of Bethlehem from the Church of the Nativity (J.T. file photo)

Saint Nicholas' companion arouses Dutch controversy

By Naomi Whimborne
Reuter

AMSTERDAM — Christmas day, eagerly awaited by children the world over anticipating Santa's arrival on his sleigh loaded with toys, is something of an anti-climax for Dutch youngsters.

In The Netherlands the genial gift-bearer with the long white beard has already been and gone 20 days earlier — but not, in recent years, without controversy.

December 5 is celebrated as the birthday of Saint Nicholas, fourth-century bishop of Myra in Turkey, regarded as patron saint of sea-farers and tradesmen, and protector of children. His name has been corrupted to Santa Claus in many other countries.

Children here lie awake at night listening not for Santa's reindeer clattering across the roof tops, but for the measured hoof-beat of Saint Nicholas's fine white horse — and the chatter of his retinue of black servants.

To the chagrin of activists in The Netherlands' immigrant community, the biggest children's festival here has as an essential character a grinning, curly-haired, thick-tipped, gold-ear-ringed bogeyman called Zwarte Piet (Black Peter).

Traditionally a Hispanic Moor with a stick to beat naughty children and a sack to carry them off to Spain, Piet's image has been softened considerably, but he remains the clowning black servant of the wise, white holy man.

"The Dutch are feeding white superiority to their children with their mothers' milk," said an

angry article in a black women's newspaper.

A group of black women from the former Dutch colony of Surinam last month published a pamphlet calling for the abolition of Zwarte Piet.

"We want to turn Saint Nicholas into an anti-racist who has solidarity with the oppressed," the pamphlet said.

But a newspaper survey indicated 77 per cent of people here cannot contemplate this festival without Piet.

"It's the biggest taboo in The Netherlands," Tara Oedayrajsingh Varma, a black member of the Amsterdam city council, told a newspaper.

"White people simply can't understand what it is like for us," she said, citing examples of small children bursting into tears on seeing a black person at the festivities.

"This is not a genuine problem," said Gerard de Klerk, an architect who has played the part of Saint Nicholas in Amsterdam's annual procession for the past 24 years.

"Little Moroccan and Surinamese children also love to dress up as Piet," he told Reuters in an interview.

"He's black because he climbs through chimneys. I think this is the most logical explanation," said de Klerk.

The chimney theory has become popular recently among Dutch liberals embarrassed by the charges of racism, but most authorities agree the legend on which the modern festival is based acquired its basic outlines in the

early middle ages, with Zwarte Piet as a demon tamed by the saint.

Bishop Nicholas was a wealthy man with a social conscience, reputed to have been imprisoned by the Roman Emperor Diocletian and credited with miracles such as calming storms and reviving murdered infants.

In The Netherlands between the end of the 12th and the middle of the 16th century, Nicholas and Swarte Piet gradually changed from being symbols of light and darkness into a master and servant bringing sweets for good children and punishing those who had been naughty.

Nowadays, two or three Saturdays before December 5, the saint, his horse and 200 Pies parade through Amsterdam.

Thousands of people line the streets and youngsters with blackened faces and bright costumes throw sweets and cookies into the crowds.

Each evening children put a shoe beside the chimney hoping to find it filled with sweets or gifts in the morning.

There are special songs and special delicacies, and on the night itself presents and cryptic poems are exchanged.

The festival faces many

criticisms as well as the charge of racism — that it is a commercial stunt, that it involves hoodwinking youngsters, that the prolonged excitement is psychologically damaging for young children, and that all the sweets are bad for their teeth.

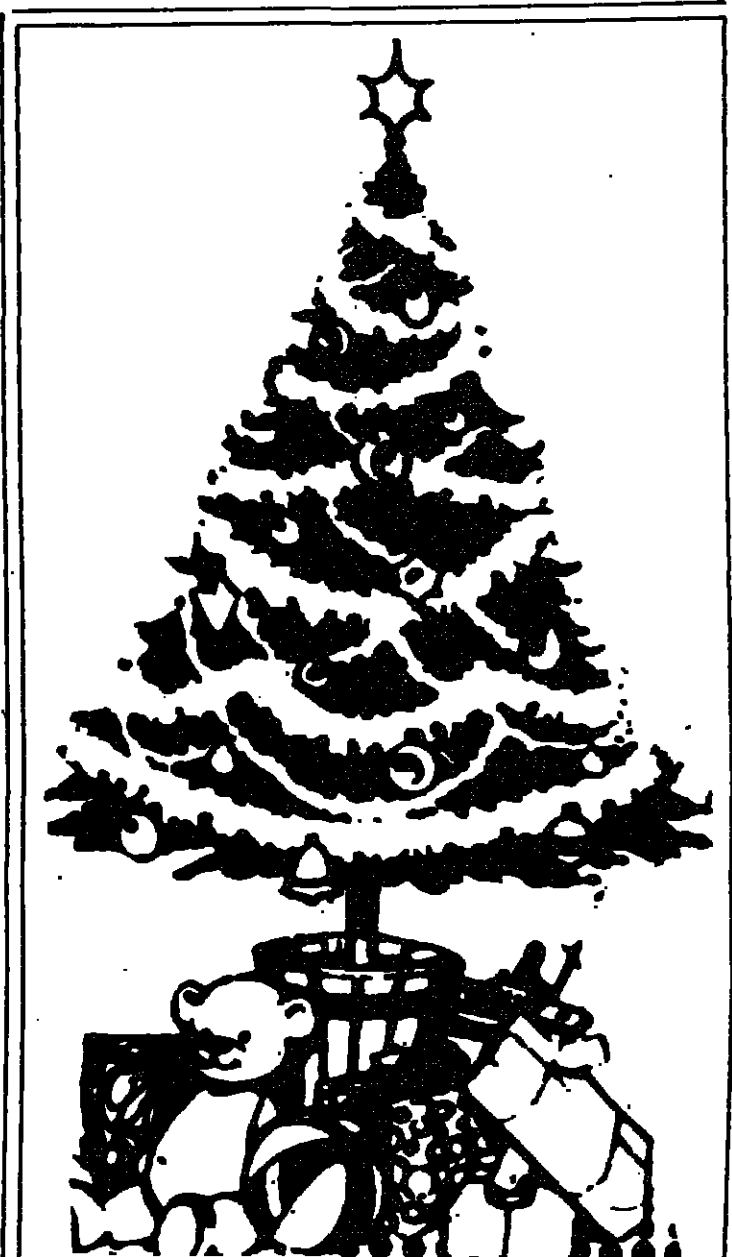
In 1971, the organisers decided to take the last criticism seriously, and the team of Pies were given apples to toss into the crowd instead of sweets.

But the experiment was not repeated. The horses in the parade became ill from all the apples that were fed to them, and Saint Nicholas complained of finding cores in his mitre.

The traditions have been subtly adapted to make Zwarte Piet more acceptable in a racially mixed society, transforming him from bogeyman into the children's friend.

Over the last decade, females have become acceptable in the role of Piet, and there is some support for a black Saint Nicholas.

But the image of the white, bearded patriarch and his black servant — nowadays called his "assistant" — seems certain to remain the focus of a festival ignored by most non-white residents, and the subject of protest by some.



Oh! Christmas tree

By Monika Warich
Special to the Jordan Times

20.

Jordan's Christmas trees

It would be even cheaper and probably most satisfying to collect one's own tree or branch cuttings from the forests on the hillsides of the highlands, as most of these trees are Aleppo pines which make beautiful Christmas trees. But anyone found cutting trees or branches without authorisation from the Forestry Department in Jordan faces a penalty of two weeks up to three months imprisonment plus the estimated value of the booty, usually between JD 5 and JD 20, warned Director of the Forest Department Ghaleb Abu Orabi.

The winter season, luckily, happens to be the time of the year when thinning and pruning is carried out in forests, he said, and the Department offers the cut trees and branches — mostly from pines and cypresses — to the public, but only against permission issued by the department.

Requests for trees, which are given out free of charge, should be directed to either the Forest Department in Kamalia (on the Suweileh-Salt road) or the Agricultural Directorates in the districts.

The trees can then be collected from the Yajuz nursery, off the road from Suweileh to Ruseifa, approximately eight kilometres from Jubeiha, Mr. Orabi said. One should not, however, expect to find perfectly grown trees there, he added, as mainly those which were growing too close to others or not growing properly for some other reason are cut. He again appealed to the public not to take any trees or branches from the forests, not only because of the risk of being caught, but primarily because trees in Jordan are extremely precious for the environment as well as difficult and slow to grow.

Whatever its cultural roots, a decorated tree is a very important part of a proper Christmas and most of those who grew up in the Christian tradition have known it from early childhood and would like to pass on this tradition to their children, living in an Islamic country that is mostly desert.

One way of getting a Christmas tree is from flower shops in Amman, which this year offer cedar trees imported from Italy, at prices ranging from JD 20 up to JD 60. Calculating the additional expenses for decoration and lighting of the tree, hanging on to your childhood dreams could become a costly affair.

Rather cheaper, but of course less genuine, are the many types of artificial Christmas trees offered all over Amman by supermarkets and bookshops, from JD 5 to JD

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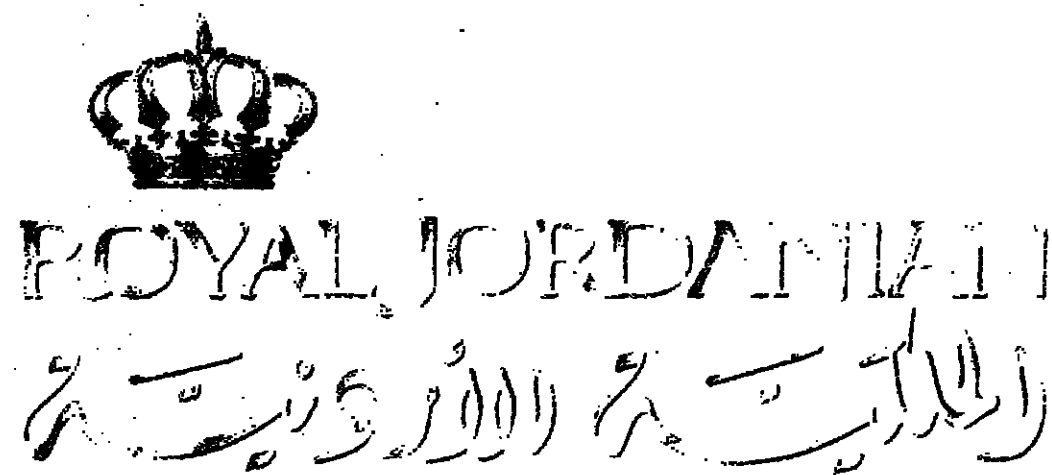


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Hotels and restaurants join in the season's festivities

By P.V. Vivekanand
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The festive mood of Christmas has invaded each and every big and small hotel and restaurant in Amman and everyone is vying with each other to come up with the best offering to the public.

It also appears that the Christmas mood has lifted the spirit of hoteliers in the country who have been facing a relatively stagnant year in the face of a decline in the number of tourists.

Some of the hotels are poised to launch a full two-week Christmas extravaganza, culminating in grand New Year celebrations, while some others have organised special programmes, including delightful floorshows and variety entertainments, on selected days running up to Christmas and New Year's Eve. Decorations are going up in every hotel lobby and staff are as busy as bees trying to come up with the most innovative ideas to attract the public at the minimum cost.

A random survey conducted by the Jordan Times shows that prices for the grand and small parties across the many hotels range from JD 5.50 to JD 35 per person depending upon the hotel and what is being offered. Let's take a look at what some of the major hotels in Amman have to offer.

French dance troupe

At the Jordanian Intercontinental, Amman's oldest five-star establishment, things are already on the move at a fast pace towards Christmas and New Year.

Perhaps the most attractive of the features that Intercontinental has is a French dance troupe — "Veronique" — performing at the Al Pasha disco every evening until Jan. 4. The troupe started performance here on Dec. 5. Cover charges are JD 3 per person and only couples are allowed.

If your taste is more Oriental than Occidental, you have the vivacious Lebanese bellydancer, "Lolita," going on stage at the Crown Patisserie every night at 8:30 p.m. until well past midnight. The JD 8,500 cover charge includes a six-course dinner. The "Lolita" show started on Dec. 10 and will last until Jan. 4 except on Dec. 31 when the troupe will be at the Crown Patisserie on New Year's Eve.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day — Dec. 24 and Dec. 25 — the Intercontinental offers you a grand dinner and lunch at the Crown Patisserie at JD 7 per head and at the Okaz restaurant at JD 6 per person.

The New Year's Eve at the Crown Patisserie is billed as a "grand gala night" with Lolita performing; the cover charge, including a grand buffet, is JD 15 per head.

On Christmas Day, the local "Tigers" band will perform at the Al Mukhtar ballroom at 1 p.m.; charge is JD 8 per head and that includes a full-course lunch.

Madrigal singers

At the lobby of the Amman Marriott, which boasts the largest Christmas tree in Jordan, the



"Santa Claus" pops into the Intercontinental Hotel for a quick round of festive cheer

Madrigal Singers are on stage from Tuesday singing carols during the lunch hours and evening until Dec. 24.

Marriott has something special for the teenagers; a Santa Claus top twenty disco extravaganza on Dec. 20 and a teenagers' Christmas party between 4 and 6 p.m. on Dec. 21. Admission to the top twenty party is free while JD 3 will foot your bill through the door for the Christmas party. Both events are scheduled to be held on the floors of the Al Rabab nightclub.

For some reason, Marriott is not holding anything special on Christmas Eve, but plans to make up for it by offering what is billed as a "huge Christmas buffet with all specialties of the season" on Dec. 25 at the Al Waha ballroom; the price is JD 6.50 per head. Again, Madrigal singers will offer their choirs for the two seatings on Christmas Day; one at 1 p.m. and the second at 3 p.m.

For New Year's Eve, Marriott offers a grand gala night at the Al Waha ballroom at JD 35 per person which includes a champagne toast. The special star of the night is the famous Lebanese singer, Aida Abu Judeh, with her full orchestra to which you can dance away 1986 and usher in the New Year. An additional attraction is a door prize — Amman-Paris-Amman air tickets and a one-week stay for a couple at the Marriott chain's France de Galles hotel in the French capital.

Festive feasts

The Holiday Inn offers a large choice for Christmas. On Dec. 24, the hotel offers a Christmas Eve dinner at the Ambassador nightclub with belly dancer Samir Younis and singers Mariam and Haroun Nommom. Price JD 9 per person.

On Christmas Day, the Inn

offers at the "steak house" lunch at JD 5.50 per head and a turkey dinner at the Ambassador nightclub at JD 7. If one prefers European varieties, hop into the Lorello restaurant for a French dinner and a bottle of wine for two at JD 9.500.

The hotel has planned to hold a "bingo dinner" at the Philadelphia hall at JD 6 per head on Dec. 28.

The series of attractions that the hotel offers reaches its high point with a JD 35 gala dinner on New Year's Eve. Twenty-four artists, local as well as from other parts of the Arab World, will perform at the Philadelphia hall on the occasion. The reputed Egyptian bellydancer Nadia Jamal leads the list, followed by singers Najwa Karam and Tunia Abu Joudeh. Also the local band "Spiders" will be in full strength. An additional attraction is Dabke dance performances by a Lebanese troupe. On New Year's Day, a typical JD 4 "Oriental champagne breakfast" and a JD 5.5 New Year buffet at the Philadelphia hall conclude the programmes at the Holiday Inn.

If you prefer to be away from the hectic nightlife in the busy Amman area on Christmas Eve, you can always pop into Amra Hotel near the Sixth Circle, and enjoy a good meal at the Al Azraq coffee shop at JD 6 per person or a quiet candle-lit dinner at the Jericho Room at JD 9 per person to the accompaniment of sweet melodies from the piano of the famous Soviet artist "Tanya."

On Christmas Day, Jericho Room also offers a Christmas buffet at JD 7.5 per person. Amra has already opened its



The Madrigal Singers at the Marriott Hotel set a festive atmosphere for the Christmas season.

annual pastry shop, which would remain open through New Year's Eve.

For the merry teenagers who would want to make the best of New Year's Eve, Amra offers its Shehrazad Disco. Cover charges are JD 10 per person and include two free drinks.

Lively dinner

The San Rock Hotel will offer a "lively" JD 5 dinner with the local band "Black Knights" and carol singers at its restaurant on Christmas Eve, and on Christmas Day, a regular lunch with no special attraction. The hotel has reserved its grand night for New Year's Eve with Arabic singers

Georgette Sayegh, Mohammad Waheed, Hanan Mansour and Mustafa Shasha as well as Karamah Haddad and the Black Knights. Starting at 9 p.m. on Dec. 31, the JD 25 dinner and floorshow will last until the wee hours of the New Year.

The Regency Palace is offering a Christmas Eve dinner at Al Alali club with Lebanese singer Issam Rajjie entertaining the guests. The JD 5 cover charge does not include food or beverages. On Christmas Eve, the hotel has a regular lunch with some traditional specialties. On New Year's Eve Rajjie will be back at Al Alali with his Al Arz folkloric group. The JD 30 per head charge includes dinner and an early breakfast.

Restaurants

Big and small restaurants are determined not to allow the major hotels to take away all the Christmas business. From Jabal Amman to Jabal Hussein and Jabal Luweibdeh to the Eighth Circle, all restaurants are offering their own kind of specialties — from Greek food to Oriental specialties from China.

Most Chinese restaurants in town — four of them — four of them — have regular menus for Christmas Eve as well as New Year. The Mandarin on Wadi Sagra street has a special buffet of Chinese specialties on Dec. 24 and Dec. 25 at about JD 5 to JD 6 per person. For the New Year, the restaurant is offering another grand buffet with a music band. As there is quite a variety of events going on all over town, it is well worth going along to your favourite haunt or trying out a new restaurant to find out what they are up to over Christmas.

Special deal for Xmas — \$20,000 a night

By Jack Schreiffman
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — For \$20,000 a night, the Fairmont Hotel atop San Francisco's posh Nob Hill has a holiday special just for you and 19 of your very best friends.

For 24 hours, 20 people can bask in the luxury of eight suites, including the famed penthouse suite, and enjoy anything legal, said spokesman Russ Alley.

"It's a package," Alley said. "Anything they want. Full scale." The guests get the entire eighth floor of the original Fairmont and seven suites in the adjoining tower — some 15 rooms — along with the fanciest food they can dream up. There are also butlers, maids, live music, a fleet of Rolls Royces and other services.

The deal is good through Dec. 31, 1987, but reservations must be made by Jan. 1. So far, the only taker is a retired corporate executive from Los Angeles, whom Alley declined to identify and who bought a \$20,000 night for his wife and 18 friends on Jan. 14.

The penthouse suite commands a spectacular view of the city. It usually rents for \$5,000 a night and undoubtedly will be the party's centerpiece.

The \$20,000 night begins with guests being transported to the hotel in four Rolls-Royces. Lined to the suites in private elevators, the guests will be serenaded by musicians playing violins and a grand piano.

That evening, there will be a banquet.

"You meet with any of our international chefs and order anything you want, a banquet for 20 people," said Alley. "Whatever you come up with, we'll serve. And the next morning, it's breakfast in bed for all of them."

If anybody's muscles get a little tired from lifting all those glasses of champagne, the weary guests can go to the Fairmont's top club for a dip in the whirlpool bath.

Checkout time? Alley says the normal hour is 1 p.m., but we'll extend that a bit.

The suite was built in 1918, offered then for \$1,000 a month, a price that today would rent an average two-bedroom apartment in San Francisco. The suite boasts a richly paneled drawing room, three bedrooms, four baths with gold-plated fixtures, a game room, library, kitchen and a secret passageway.

Presidents, royalty and prime ministers have stood at its windows, enjoying spectacular views of the city.

Rich oak adorns the walls. Thick carpets muffle footsteps. The doors are of Philippine mahogany and hearths are inlaid with detailed lapis lazuli, marble and woods. A contemporary art collection covers the walls. The arched, mirrored game room is floored in Persian tile.

The library is a small, round room topped by a dome with a representation of the constellations. One shelf of books opens into a passageway leading to the roof.



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لوفثانزا

Santa Claus — a special part of Christmas for all children

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — That sweet, jolly, white-bearded man, Santa Claus, who is loved by all, is in town. And he has so much in store for those boys and girls who have been "good" for the past year.

Santa, who disguises himself under different names in different countries, has arrived from the North Pole. He is landing in different places in Amman to bear-hug the children, seat them on his comfortable lap, and hear what they would like to have for Christmas. He gives them small but meaningful gifts to remember him well, and they promise to be good in the coming year.

Santa can be seen in the afternoons in front of the colourful Wadi Sagra bookshop, stopping children who are walking or riding in cars, and giving them candy and lollipops. He lifts the little ones off their feet and carries them inside the shop to offer them presents which they would love and cherish because they come from the loveable Santa himself.

And tomorrow, good old Santa is landing in Kids Land Centre at the Housing Bank complex, and the newly-opened Smurfs Tower at the Tower Building, to greet children from one to fourteen years old. He will be there laughing and playing with the children for ten days, and giving sweets and presents to younger children and to winners of the games and contests he has in mind.

While children have the chance to play at the two centres on electronic rides and video games, and others watch Christmas films

at the 40-seat theatre at Smurfs Tower, others can participate in Arabic and English song contests, dance contests, and compete in playing musical instruments. Santa will provide the instruments. And for the hungry ones, good food and special Christmas snacks are sold at the cafeterias. And since Santa will be at the two fun centres, and "tis the season to be jolly," he decided that he will be friendly to the parents as well: He is offering free parking at both buildings.

Santa is also stopping over at the well-known hotels in Amman. On the noon of Dec. 19, Santa will greet his loving children at the Marriott Hotel lobby, and then he will meet them at the Christmas party he is throwing later on that day in the Rababa night club at the hotel. He is planning to give them a good time by singing Christmas carols with the children, dancing and playing. He also has special holiday treats and gifts he has prepared especially for the boys and girls.

On Christmas day, the Jordan Intercontinental Hotel and the Regency Hotel have Santa Claus at their Christmas lunch and party, ready to surprise the youngsters. Jordan Intercontinental's Santa is inviting the Tigers Band to help him entertain the children. And the Regency's Santa has quite a bit of surprises awaiting.

Also on Christmas day, Santa will take the kids on train and tractor rides at the Alia Gateway Hotel. The kids can also enjoy riding horses in the wilderness with that sweet man. Santa will present the children not only with good Christmas treats at the hotel

and food from the six continents, but also special gifts his elves made especially for them back in the North Pole. Alia, the Royal Jordanian Airline delivered the gifts free of charge from Santa's hometown. And for those who cannot meet Santa there on Dec. 25, they can still see him the day after Christmas.

Santa is also landing at the Jerusalem Frantel on Dec. 19 and 21, where he will receive the children for Christmas parties from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on both days.

Santa also decided that he will see children at the San Rock Hotel. He is throwing two fun parties on Dec. 26 — one in the morning and one in the afternoon — and has invited the Black Nights Band to entertain the youngsters. Along with food and prizes, there will be a puppet show, a magician, and special children's songs all of which came all the way from Syria to help Santa in bringing laughs to the faces of the children.

On Dec. 22, Santa will be at the Holiday Inn ready to give the children a good time to remember during a Christmas party that he keeps as a surprise for them. In addition, Santa is planning to entertain his favourite people in the afternoon with special children films he has chosen especially for them.

Santa Claus, who loves all the children of the world has something for the kids of the foreign community too. So, he is paying a special visit to the American Community School on Thursday to wish them happiness and ask them to bring happiness to others.

By the way, the West German Santa came through Jordan and paid surprise visits to a number of families and played with their children; he had a bag full of gifts for them.

Santa Claus is always happy to bring joy to the children of God, and is very glad that he can bring happiness to the hearts of the children of Jordan. But Santa alone cannot bring joy to the hearts of the little ones without the help and support of the grown-ups. The Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped is holding its annual bazaar on the morning of Dec. 17, at the Amman Marriott Hotel. The proceeds of the smallest gift you may buy will help bring smiles and happiness to an unfortunate child.

Merry Christmas.



Children with problems write to 'Christ Child'

By George Jahn
The Associated Press

CHRISTKINDL, Austria — Each Christmas, thousands of people from the four corners of the world write to an Austrian postmaster expressing their hopes, fears and wishes.

Most of the letters come from children, but adults also write. The content varies, but the addressee is always the same: Christ Child. The reason is twofold. The infant Jesus plays the central role at Christmas in most European countries, bringing gifts to the deserving and consolation to the needy. And the name of this upper Austrian hamlet translates as Christ Child.

Letters began coming 36 years ago, when a special post office was set up next to a baroque church of pilgrimage to do business over the Christmas season.

Postal officials say the original idea was to give Austrians a chance to send Christmas letters with a special Christ Child postmark.

About 42,000 letters cleared the post office in the first year. In

1985, more than 1.8 million a year were processed between opening day Nov. 28 and Jan. 6.

The letters now come from as far away as Mexico and Australia, the bulk of them from people seeking the postmark along with a special stamp.

Others containing a wish or other personal information amount to less than 10 per cent of the total received. But they are the most remarkable, particularly those from adults in trouble, said postmaster Wallner, picking an envelope at random from the stack on his desk.

"Dear Christ Child," a Vienna man wrote Dec. 2. "My wish for Christmas is to be able to earn a bit more money in an honest fashion so that I can offer my new family a nice home."

"We have already sold everything we can to be able to buy our son something. It is not at all easy to remain honest, but I have the firm desire to make it in an honest way."

A West German suffering from advanced hearing loss asked for a favour.

"Because Christ Child is at a

place of pilgrimage, I would like to ask for a prayer and a consecrated cross to help me get over my illness," he said. "Light a candle for me."

Wallner said he tries to help those he considers most needy and would fulfill the West German's wishes.

"We are definitely going to talk to the priest, our Christkindl neighbour, and we'll discuss what

"I wish that no war comes," said one unsigned letter in an infant's scrawl, after listing hoped-for presents.

to do," said Wallner, reaching for the next envelope.

It contained a letter from an 80-year-old woman in Munich, West Germany, complaining that her wishes for a used television set have been left unfulfilled for years and she cannot buy one on a monthly pension equaling \$250.

But, she wrote that what she really wants is a small present for

Randa Habib's
Corner

Reflections of a dreamer

WHEN I was a little girl, I often heard my mother say: "I worry about Randa, she is such a dreamer."

Well, with time, the practical side of my character took over. Still, one of my dearest hobbies is to dream. I love spending time on my own, doing nothing, just looking at the ceiling, and dreaming. This is when crazy things become normal and the unreachable so near.

My last dream concerned the whole world. The meetings in Amman of the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (ICHI) were the push-button of this dream. I thought, if so many leaders, politicians and intellectuals, from different countries meet in order to improve the quality of human life, there is certainly hope for a better future.

The ICHI was formed in order to enhance international awareness of humanitarian issues. The work of this independent commission is intended to be "part of the continuing search by the world community for a more adequate international framework to uphold human dignity."

One notes with great interest that the members of this commission are a group of eminent persons from all parts of the world. The last comer is a representative of the Soviet Union who now sits in the commission together with fellow members from the United States, Britain, Tanzania and Poland. Isn't this enough to make you dream? Imagine that this commission would be able one day to contribute in restricting armed conflicts, in putting an end to the arms race and particularly to nuclear armaments, in solving the problems of refugees, of street children, of stateless persons, of minorities. All it takes is a voice, even a distant voice in the wilderness of the desert, that shouts loudly and repeatedly, denouncing injustice. With hope, that voice will become a crowd, and that crowd will turn into masses ... and then, the dream becomes reality.

her granddaughter, an orphan with heart trouble who comes to Munich every week to clean her flat. "I can do without the TV for a long time, if I can only help her," she said.

Wallner said he planned to send a copy of her letter to a Munich TV dealer with a request for help. All letters get replies, most of them preprinted forms in English, German, Italian, French and

lists, often in envelopes with no stamp or return address and addressed simply to the Christ Child. But even some of these express worries.

"I wish that no war comes," said one unsigned letter written in an infant's scrawl, after listing hoped-for presents. A little girl called Serpie also wrote down what she wanted, adding: "I hope that everyone remains healthy."

The others writing to Christkindl — those seeking the special stamps — usually enclose cash or a check along with envelopes which they ask to have processed and returned, said Wallner. But some who want to turn a profit take the business more seriously.

"As of this year, a Dutchman has been coming here for 26 years, and a Belgian has been coming for 30 years at least," according to the mustachioed postmaster. Both have hundreds of envelopes stamped and sell them at home.

A third visitor "spends a whole week here and ticks stamps until late in the night," paying about 30,000 schillings — \$2,000 — for Christkindl stamps, he chuckled.



Smiles on children's faces when Santa walks through the door

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River Plate tops Bucharest in Toyota Cup championship

TOKYO (AP) — River Plate striker Antonio Alzamendi scored through a split-second gap in Steaua Bucharest's otherwise stiff defence, giving the Argentinians a 1-0 triumph Sunday in the battle with the Romanians for the Toyota Cup.

The only goal came in the 28th minute when Alzamendi, a member of the Uruguay national team, trapped a long free kick from veteran midfielder Norberto Alonso and shot a grounder that ricocheted off the right goal post. On the rebound, Alzamendi headed a fierce shot past Romanian goalie Dumitru Stingaciu.

The free kick from centre field, awarded for dangerous play by a Romanian defender against River

Plate forward Juan Funes, caught the Romanians by surprise because Funes was still lying on the ground when Alonso kicked to Alzamendi.

"Alonso was looking at me and I knew that the ball was coming. The next moment I had the ball and shot. I stepped back for the heading," Alzamendi said in a postgame news conference.

Steaua Bucharest, playing the game that decides the world's top club soccer team without ace

goalkeeper Helmuth Duckadam and playmaker Ladislau Boloni, largely dominated the field with aggressive and speedy combinations before 62,000 spectators at Tokyo's National Stadium.

Duckadam is recovering from arm surgery. Boloni has been sidelined by a leg injury.

Steaua outshot River Plate 16-9.

River Plate offence suffered from a tight man-to-man mark on Funes and its strikers failed to convert three free kicks near the penalty area in the first 10 minutes.

Steaua almost scored the opener in the 16th minute when defender Miodrag Belodedici fired a fast shot after trapping a forward lob pass. But Uruguayan referee Jose Martinez Bazan called offside against Belodedici.

After Alzamendi's goal, Steaua repeatedly assaulted River Plate's goal mouth area, especially in the second half. But it could not penetrate Argentina's defence line, centering around national team member Oscar Ruggeri and Uruguay national team member Nelson Gutierrez.

NY Yacht Club eliminated for 1st time in cup history

FREMANTLE, Australia (AP) — The New York Yacht Club was eliminated from the America's Cup race series Sunday for the only time in the trophy's 135-year history.

The club's challenger, America II skippered by John Koliuss, was knocked out of the running for one of four playoff slots by losing to New Zealand while USA was defeating French Kiss.

Both USA from San Francisco and French Kiss joined San Diego's Stars and Stripes and New Zealand, the runaway leader of the challenge round robins, in the semifinals to pick a yacht to race the winner of the ongoing Australian defender series.

With one race remaining in the third elimination series, Koliuss can do no better than finish fifth, one point behind the four leaders. USA's Tom Blackaller drove the final nail in America II's coffin by defeating the Frenchmen and taking over their third position.

USA now has 139 points to 129 for fourth place French Kiss. America II has 116 points and will finish Monday's final day of the challenge round with a bye. The 12-point victory will leave her with 128 points.

Koliuss gave it his all, leading at

the first five of eight marks. Chris Dickson caught him on the sixth leg, however, and hung on to win by three boat lengths or 15 seconds.

The New York Yacht Club's original America won the Cup in 1851 in England when it was first put up for competition. In the intervening years, the American club defended the trophy successfully 23 times with an overall record of 79 wins and only 12 losses.

The Americans finally lost it in 1983 to the Australians.

Running Cloud wins trimaran trans-Atlantic

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados (AP) — Running Cloud, a 12-metre catamaran built in California and sailed by an American crew of two led the field to the finish Saturday in the first Atlantic race for cruisers.

Larry Pollop and Barbara Gleason sailed Running Cloud across the Atlantic ahead of the other 209 yachts from 44 countries which set sail Nov. 29 from Las Palmas in the Canary Islands.

The trimaran sailed into Bridgetown's Carlisle Bay just after 6 a.m. (1100 GMT) at the end of its 4,344-kilometre race. Organisers and officials, who expected the boat later in the day, were surprised by its early arrival.

Pollop, an experienced sailor who has also crossed the Pacific, said he and his yacht had encountered no serious problems and that they had experienced rough seas only the last few days.

Barbados Tourism Minister Branford Taitt headed an official delegation to welcome the pair.

Edberg, Jarryd win Masters

LONDON (AP) — Stefan Edberg and Anders Jarryd of Sweden successfully defended their crown in the Nabisco Masters Doubles Championship Sunday with a 6-3, 7-6, 6-3 victory over Yannick Noah and Guy Forget of France.

In winning the \$72,000 first prize, Edberg and Jarryd scored the only two service breaks of the 1-hour, 50-minute match — in the sixth game of the first set and the fourth game of the third set.

Both came off Noah's serve.

In the second-set tiebreaker, Jarryd and Edberg moved to a 4-0 lead and won 7-2 by breaking Noah's serve for the final two points.

Noah and Forget, who had won all four of their previous matches in this remodelled world doubles championship, changed their shirts from red to white for the third set, but it didn't change their luck.

They reached break point eight times in the match but never converted those opportunities, and went down quickly in the final set, with Noah spending much of his time arguing with the umpire and complaining about cooking odors from the opera-box pantries of the Royal Albert Hall.

Becker takes Junior Masters

STUTTGART, West Germany (R) — Boris Becker, crushed in straight sets by Ivan Lendl in last weekend's senior final in New York, won the Young Masters tennis title for the third successive year Sunday.

The Wimbledon champion beat Jonas B. Svensson 7-6, 7-6, 6-3, though the 23rd world ranked Swede showed no fear of Becker's awesome serve which he broke three times before bowing to the West German's superior power.

"In the first two sets, the tennis was world class," said Becker. "He's a super player and quite capable of breaking into the world's top 10."

Becker captured Svensson's serve midway through the first set but the Swede broke straight back, only losing the resultant tiebreak 7-5 to a typical flash of Becker magic when the champion dived full length to deliver a winning volley.

The second set followed a similar course, though the Swede wilted under Becker's power in the second tiebreak, dropping 13 consecutive points from 2-1 down to lose the tiebreak 7-1 and the first two crucial games of the third set.

Liverpool downs Chelsea 3-0

LONDON (AP) — English Soccer League champion Liverpool beat Chelsea 3-0 Sunday to climb to third in the standings and leave the London club rooted to the bottom.

In another First Division game staged Sunday, Leicester City downed Oxford United 2-0 to move up five places from next to bottom.

After a sluggish start, in which struggling Chelsea carved out three promising openings, Liverpool took the lead in the 31st minute. The goal came from a free kick after a foul by Joe McLaughlin on Ian Rush and Irishman Ronnie Whelan curled the kick round Chelsea's defensive wall into the net from 20 metres.

With 13 minutes remaining, Nicol scored a stunning third, cutting inside from the left wing and chipping the ball over the goalkeeper from the edge of the penalty area.

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF TENDER AVAILABILITY TURBINE ISLAND TENDER NO. 52/86

Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) announces the Turbine Island Tender Document, No. 52/86, for the Aqaba Thermal Power Station Stage II is available for purchase as of 15 December 1986.

The tender consists of the design, supply, delivery, erection, testing and commissioning of two turbine units each 130 MW with related auxiliaries. The Turbine Island Contract will be financed from part of the World Bank's loan which is expected to be assigned for the Aqaba Thermal Power Plant, Stage II. Subsequently only contractors from countries which are members in the World Bank in addition to Switzerland, and Taiwan, China are invited to participate in this tender.

Sealed tenders shall be submitted to the Tendering Committee before 10:00 a.m. Amman time, 31 March, 1987 at the JEA offices in Amman accompanied by a security bond of 550,000 JD (five hundred fifty thousand) Jordan Dinars.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 10:00 a.m., Amman local time on March 31st at the offices of JEA. Tender Documents are available from the address given below for a non-refundable fee of JD 250 payable to JEA for each set consisting of two copies of the Tender Documents.

Jordan Electricity Authority
Post Office Box 2310
Amman, Jordan
Telex: 21259/23270

CARS FOR SALE

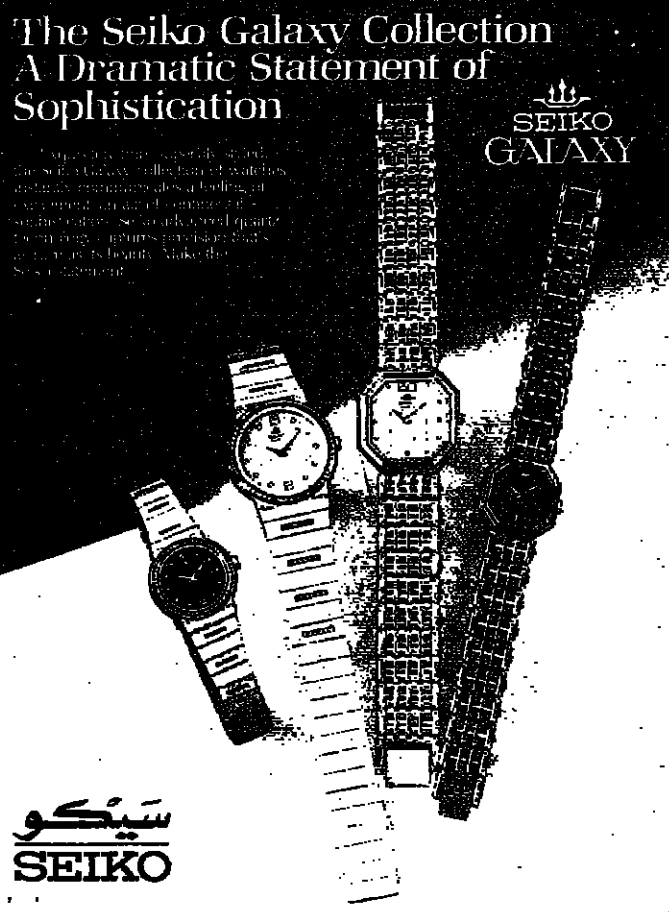
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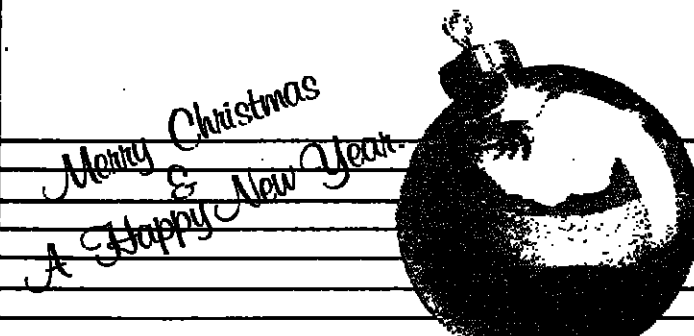
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Cinema Tel: 675573

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THE REPORT

(Arabic)

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Cinema Tel: 677420

PLAZA

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سنة ١٤٠٧

54 killed, 310 injured in Karachi violence

KARACHI (Agencies) — At least 54 people were killed and 310 injured in the worst orgy of ethnic bloodshed in Karachi's recent history, hospital doctors said.

About half the injured suffered bullet wounds. Doctors said 28 bodies were brought to Qamar Hospital, 21 to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital and five to Piracha Hospital.

Firemen said some 350 shops and houses were set on fire.

Police sources said more than 30 people had been arrested. After a day of rioting in the Orangi township area, army troops were called in to patrol the area and the government imposed an indefinite curfew in four districts.

Witnesses said rioting between Urdu-speaking Biharis and Pushtu-speaking Pathans broke out early Sunday, and the two

sides set each others' slum dwellings on fire. Firefighters still were fighting house fires hours later, they added.

The police initially charged with clubs and used tear gas to try to separate the two sides, but failed. The police then opened fire, the witnesses said.

By Sunday evening, the troops had not taken control of the entire area, which has an estimated population of 500,000, they added.

It was not immediately known how many of the casualties resulted from police shootings and how many from clashes between the two groups.

Doctors at Abbasi Shaheed

Hospital said they had received 21 bodies from the Orangi township area.

Doctors at Qamar Hospital said 28 bodies were received there. At those two hospitals and a civil hospital, a total of 125 injured were admitted, some in critical condition, officials said.

Orangi was one of the districts where a curfew was enforced, along with Qasba, Nazimabad and Lalukhet.

Rioting between the two groups had left 51 dead in early November, and tensions have remained high since then.

Last Wednesday, police opened fire on several hundred demonstrators, mainly from the Urdu-speaking community, who were demanding the release of seven leaders jailed in rioting in November.

Wednesday's protest erupted

after the refugee National Movement had called on its supporters to mourn for those who died in November clashes with the Pathans, who come from northern Pakistan.

Meanwhile, a curfew already was in effect since Friday morning at Sohrab and Goth, where the government was continuing "operation clean-up," aimed at stopping sales of illegal weapons and the smuggling of heroin to Europe and the United States.

Authorities said that since Friday, army troops had seized 230 kilograms of heroin, a large quantity of other drugs, illegal arms and bombs.

Angered by the army operation, Pathans started chanting slogans and throwing stones Saturday night in several areas including Nazimabad and Orangi, where large

Berlin crash probe focuses on human error

BERLIN (AP) — Investigators probing the crash of a Soviet jetliner have recovered the flight recorder and are focusing on human error as a possible cause of the accident that killed 69 of the 81 people aboard.

The Aeroflot TU-134, flying from the Soviet city of Minsk, crashed Friday night in heavy fog in a wooded area about 3 kilometres from East Berlin's Schoenefeld Airport.

Transport Minister Otto Arndt said 60 East Germans, an Austrian and all eight members of the Soviet crew died, the state-run ADN news agency reported Saturday.

Mr. Arndt said 12 survived were in East Berlin hospitals. Two of the injured were in critical condition, according to the agency.

Some 400 emergency workers, medical and aviation experts, including some from the Soviet Union, were taking part in the investigation.

Mr. Arndt, heading the investigation, told East German television that investigators were studying the flight recorder to determine the cause of the crash.

West German television said, without citing sources, that because investigators had not found any signs of mechanical failure, they were focusing on human error as the cause.

U.S. launches new sub; 58 protesters arrested

GROTON, Connecticut (AP) — The Tennessee, a nuclear-powered Trident missile submarine destined to become the navy's most powerful weapon, was launched Saturday as 58 anti-nuclear protesters were arrested.

About 400 demonstrators took part in the non-violent protest, and police carried away those who obstructed entry to the Electric Boat Shipyard, a division of General Dynamics Corp. and sole builder of the Trident subs.

"It was the same old thing — blocking sidewalks. Nothing exciting," said police Sgt. Richard Chmiel. City police said 50 protesters were arrested outside the shipyard and charged with creating a public disturbance, an infraction that carries a \$68 fine payable by mail.

After the launch, demonstrators marched to the nearby navy submarine base, where another eight were arrested on the same charges, Groton Police reported.

More than 1,000 guests huddled in makeshift shelters inside the shipyard on the Thames River in south eastern Connecticut, where strong gusts pushed the wind-chill factor to minus 13F (minus 25 C).

The Tennessee will be the first

Trident submarine to be fitted with Trident II, or D-5, nuclear missiles. When it completes two years of testing due to begin in 1987, the new missile will be the most potent in the navy's arsenal.

The D-5 and its predecessor, the C-4 first deployed in 1979, were developed by Lockheed Corp.

The D-5, however, will have a range of more than 9,650 kilometres compared with more than 6,440 kilometres for the C-4. It will have 10 to 15 separate warheads, also more than the C-4, and will be far more accurate, enabling it to destroy an enemy's hardened missile silos.

The Tennessee will join the fleet in 1989, about two years longer than normal for a Trident submarine because of the additional test period for the missiles, the navy said.

"Assure you this event will not go unnoticed, for this ship... is the lead ship of the most powerful deterrent our nation has ever put to sea," Adm. Frank B. Kelso II, commander of the Atlantic Fleet and a native Tennessean, said in his keynote speech.

Opponents of the D-5 claim its deployment will be destabilising, on the assumption that the only way to avoid its destructive accuracy would be for an enemy to strike first.

Time bomb found in van stopped by Irish police

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — Police said they found a 540 kilogramme time bomb in the back of a van and arrested several people at a checkpoint outside Newry.

A police official in Belfast said the bomb, made of homemade explosives and attached to timing devices, was one of the biggest ever uncovered in the strife-torn province.

The official, who spoke on condition she not be identified, said a British army bomb disposal team took six hours to defuse the bomb.

She declined to specify how many people had been arrested. The van was travelling into Newry, a town near the border with the Irish Republic, when police stopped it, she said.

The Irish Republican Army and other Roman Catholic guerrilla groups are fighting to drive British forces out of Northern Ireland and unite the Protestant-dominated province with the Catholic Irish Republic under a socialist administration.

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) apologised Saturday for killing a dairy worker in a bomb blast, saying the bomb was meant for another man.

Police said Desmond Caldwell, 44, was killed Friday when a bomb went off under the cab of a truck he was repairing at a creamery near Castlederg, County Tyrone, about 6.5 kilometres from the Irish border.

In a statement issued to news organisations Saturday, the IRA said the blast was meant for an unidentified man who is the regular driver of the truck. The guerrilla group said the intended victim was a part-time member of the police reserve.

Caldwell had no current connection with the security forces, police said.

Conceding its mistake, the IRA said "to his family and friends, we offer our condolences."

Members of the mainly Protestant, British-administered security forces are the main targets of the IRA.

Fireman hurt in London airport luxury hotel fire

LONDON (AP) — Fire broke out in a basement sauna area of a 670-room luxury hotel by London's Heathrow Airport, forcing evacuation of the four-storey building, officials said.

One fireman was injured, but no one else was believed hurt. The cause of the fire could not be determined immediately. About 85 firemen, using five pumps, battled the blaze at the Penta Hotel and brought it under control in just over an hour, the London Fire Brigade said.

It could not be determined how many people were in the hotel at the time, but hundreds were seen being led from the building.

In addition to hotel guests,

about 800 people were attending a Christmas dinner and dance in the Penta's banquet hall when the fire started at 7:37 p.m. (1937 GMT).

All guests were thought to have gotten out safely, the fire brigade said, but one fireman was taken to a hospital for treatment of minor injuries.

Firefighters with breathing apparatus were searching the building to make certain everyone got out in time.

The fire started in the sauna and exercise room in the hotel basement, fire officials said. Flames were confined to the basement, but all floors were heavily smoke-logged.

Ershad returns from S. Arabia

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — President Hussain Muhammad Ershad returned home Sunday after a three-day official visit to Saudi Arabia.

Officials accompanying the president said talks between the Bangladesh leader and King Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz had "strengthened the brotherly ties between the two countries."

The Saudi government promised more economic assistance for the development of Bangladesh, officials said.

Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh's major donor in the Middle East, has provided Dhaka with \$900 million of economic assistance since 1976. More than 20,000 Bangladeshis are now employed in Saudi Arabia.

President Ershad, accompanied by his wife Raushan Ershad, also made a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina during his visit.

It was Gen. Ershad's first official visit abroad since the president lifted four and half years of martial law last month.

Radiation from Chernobyl leak drastically reduced

MOSCOW (AP) — Radiation around the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the site of the world's worst atomic accident, has been drastically reduced and rivers in the area have been brought within sanitary standards, the government has announced.

The statement from the Communist Party Central Committee and the Council of Ministers, read on the television news programme "Vremya" (time), Saturday discussed steps taken to cope with the disaster and said "heroic work" had been accomplished.

It indicated the death toll from the April 26 explosion and fire at the Ukrainian atomic power station remained 31.

"An especially important step has been accomplished in the work to liquidate the consequences of the accident," the Soviet leadership said. It said that Chernobyl's stricken No. 4 reactor, now encased in concrete, "has ceased to be a source of radioactive pollution for the environment."

The statement noted, as had been previously reported, that Chernobyl's No. 1 and 2 reactors, shut down after the accident almost eight months ago, had been recently brought back on line.

It credited "heroic work" by workers, engineers, technicians, scientists and Soviet army soldiers for dealing with the disaster.

The leadership also said "necessary measures are being carried out to guarantee the security of all active Soviet nuclear power plants," and that regulatory bodies had become more demanding.

The Chernobyl accident prompted the government to evacuate 116,000 people and pay 800 million rubles (\$1.18 billion) compensation for unspecified losses, the statement said. It said contributions from Soviet citizens for relief totalled 520 million rubles (\$764 million).

Soviet officials previously put the cost of the accident and the resulting loss of electrical power at 2 billion rubles (\$2.9 billion).

Because of the work, the statement said, there had been a "radical improvement of radiation conditions" within a 30-kilometre zone of the stricken power station.

It did not give details or say whether evacuees would be allowed to return.

As a result of dozens of kilometres of dams built to block contamination of rivers by radioactivity, the Dnieper River basin — the main source of drinking water for Kiev, the Soviet Union's third-largest city — "corresponds to sanitary norms," the statement said.

"Much still remains to be done," the statement said, without giving details.

Marcos hopes to return home during Christmas

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Deposed President Ferdinand Marcos, in a voice tape broadcast on Sunday, said he hopes that some "miracle" will allow him to return to his homeland during Christmas.

Meanwhile, the Board of Air Transport has closed the Laoag Airport in Marcos' home region of Ilocos Norte to all private aircraft, airport officials said. Manila newspapers said the move was to prevent any attempt by Marcos to re-enter the country.

In a message broadcast on the private radio station DZEC, Marcos, who lives in exile in Hawaii, said:

"This is my prayer, this is my hope, that I see you soon... To each and everyone of you, I say, if we do not see each other soon, Merry Christmas and a happy New Year, although it is my hope that somehow by a miracle, we will see each other in those holidays," the former ruler said.

Marcos, who spoke in English and in the local Ilocano dialect, referred to President Corason Aquino as "this woman who is under the control and who is a dummy of Communists."

He criticised Mrs. Aquino's peace policy towards insurgents, saying the Communists "have their own timetable" for grabbing power in the Philippines.

The government has signed a 60-day ceasefire agreement with rebels. Military reports indicate the four-day-old truce is holding.

Mr. Marcos accused the Aquino government of corruption and said, "why does she not talk about this openly and then after that, after having said her mea culpa (my fault), then perhaps we can forgive her."

Since his ouster in a February revolt, Marcos has repeatedly vowed he will return someday. His supporters in Manila have claimed on several occasions that his return was imminent.

The Bureau of Air Transport barred all private aircraft from



Ferdinand Marcos

landing at Laoag Airport, 400 kilometres north of Manila, in an order issued on Friday. The bureau took the same action in September when rumours were rife that Mr. Marcos was about to return to the country.

The Manila newspaper Sunday Times, quoting "military sources," reported Sunday that Marcos' former military chief, Gen. Fabian Ver, arrived in the Ilocos region by boat on Friday "to prepare" for Marcos' coming.

The newspaper, in the same article, quoted area deputy constabulary commander Maj. Avelino Edralin, as saying the report was "merely a rumour" spread by Marcos loyalists.

DZEC, a station sympathetic to Mr. Marcos, on Sunday also denied that Gen. Ver, who fled with Mr. Marcos to Hawaii, had arrived secretly in Ilocos.

In his broadcast, Mr. Marcos said Mrs. Aquino's decision to reorganise her cabinet "is a total confession that her administration... has been a complete failure."

He said her government "is about to collapse."

Mr. Marcos called Mrs. Aquino, a devout Catholic, and her officials "Pharisees who pray in public places."

"Privately, they are the demons incarnate," Mr. Marcos said.

Cheaper, crude form of cocaine surfacing in U.S.

HOLLYWOOD, Florida (AP) — A crude and cheap form of cocaine, which can be deadly because of poisonous impurities, is appearing among drug users in Florida, a newspaper has reported.

Basuco, a coffee-coloured paste long used in Colombia and other South American countries, is known in the United States only to a small circle of law enforcement authorities, medical experts, a few dealers and users, who smoke it like crack, the highly addictive refined form of cocaine, the Sun-Tattler of Hollywood reported.

Drug-sniffing dogs haven't been trained to recognise it, the newspaper said.

Federal, state and local law enforcement sources told the newspaper that abuse of basuco had the potential to outpace that of crack.

"There is not a lot of information on it because it's just surfacing here," said Becky Panebianco, a Florida Department of Law Enforcement agent. "But it is the cheapest form of cocaine available."

Basuco could bring the cost to a user down to "a stunning 1-dollar price (per dose), which would really make it available to anyone," said Dr. Sat Punyani, a physician at Hollywood Memorial Hospital's emergency room.

"This thing could really become a nightmare," Punyani said.

The use of crack has reached epidemic proportions in most of the country's major cities by opening a whole new market of drug abusers with prices of \$5 or \$10, down from what formerly was a \$50 high.

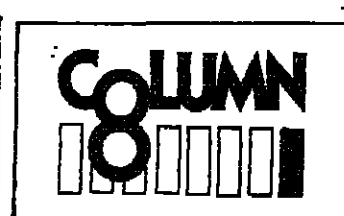
But basuco, which is the Spanish name for coca paste or cocaine sulfate, is even cheaper because it has not been processed with the expensive chemicals used to purify cocaine.

"It's the step between the coca leaf and cocaine hydrochloride," Ms. Panebianco said. Cocaine hydrochloride is the white powder that has been chemically treated with ether and acetone. This is the powder that users snort.

Ms. Panebianco said it contains an unprocessed residue of impurities such as lead and sulphuric acid.

"It is more dangerous than crack cocaine because it is not pure," Ms. Panebianco said. "Use can lead to serious brain damage, and death."

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) official statistics indicate that basuco is "not yet a problem in the United States but that it is smoked regularly by more than 600,000 Colombians under the age of 25," said DEA agent Larry Gallini in Washington, D.C.



Man gets 10 years for threatening Reagan

MIAMI (AP) — A man described as having a history of psychiatric problems was sentenced to 10 years in prison for sending threatening letters to President Ronald Reagan. Ronald J. Mitchell, 31, pleaded guilty to two counts of threatening the president. U.S. District Judge Aileen Hastings recommended that Mitchell undergo "mental and educational treatment" at the Federal Correctional Institution at Butner, North Carolina, and that he be eligible for parole after serving a third of his sentence.

Federal investigators said there was evidence that Mitchell had gone to Washington after sending three threatening letters to Reagan. He was described by an Ohio magistrate as a transient with a history of psychiatric problems, federal court files said. Mitchell, who claimed to be a U.S. army deserter who had worked for a fast-food chain and held many other jobs, never stated a reason for wanting to kill Reagan.

Opponents of the D-5 claim its deployment will be destabilising, on the assumption that the only way to avoid its destructive accuracy would be for an enemy to strike first.

Movie crew, stars stuck on ferry

NEW YORK (AP) — A sandbar in New York harbour rewrote the script for Billy Dee Williams' new movie, bringing a nautical chase scene to a sudden stop and stranding 80 people, including the star, in freezing temperatures. "They got too close to the mud, and now they're waiting for the tide to come in," said police officer Louis Llanes after the ferry ran aground off the Red Hook section of Brooklyn around 10:30 a.m. (1530 GMT). It sat there until high tide began rolling in shortly before 3 p.m. (2000 GMT).

The movie's co-producer, Michael Shapiro, said Williams and co-stars Michael Wilding Jr. and Vanity were aboard the ferry filming a chase and shootout scene for their upcoming movie Love You to Death. Williams, who plays a detective investigating a drug-and-murder ring, was supposed to rescue girlfriend Vanity after jumping aboard a Manhattan-bound ferry from a second boat headed to Staten Island. But the ferry apparently was blown off course by the wind, said Deborah Niewald, who handles publicity for the film. In addition to the film stars, the movie's director, film crews and several dozen extras were stranded on the stuck ferry, she said.

287 U.S. recruits found exposed to AIDS

WASHINGTON (AP) — Military recruits are continuing to show exposure to the deadly AIDS virus at a rate of about 1.5 cases per 1,000 people tested, according to the Pentagon's latest figures. The latest quarterly report showed 287 out of 174,591 recruits screened were denied entry to the armed services during the three months ending Sept. 30 after testing positive for exposure to an antibody associated with AIDS. AIDS, or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, is a fatal disease that destroys the body's ability to resist infection. In the United States, it has been confined primarily to homosexuals, intravenous drug users and people who received tainted blood transfusions. The latest report shows the percentage rate of positive tests has remained almost constant at 1.5 cases per 1,000 individuals tested. The male rate was 1.66 cases per 1,000 men and the female rate was 0.66 cases per 1,000 women.

Mother of Marcos allowed to leave Philippines

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — The 96-year-old mother of former President Ferdinand Marcos will be allowed to join her exiled son in the United States, the presidential palace has said. Dona Josefa Edralin Marcos had been confined in a suite at the Philippine Heart Centre for Asia. The government of Corason Aquino has been paying the medical bills. Presidential spokesman Teodoro Benigno said that Mrs. Aquino would also pay expenses if Mrs. Marcos decided to be with her 69-year-old son, who is living in Honolulu. Benigno said Mrs. Aquino "has been willing for a long time to allow Dona Josefa to go to Honolulu." He was responding to questions about reports that the deposed president would try to return to the Philippines to see his ailing mother.

J V T C

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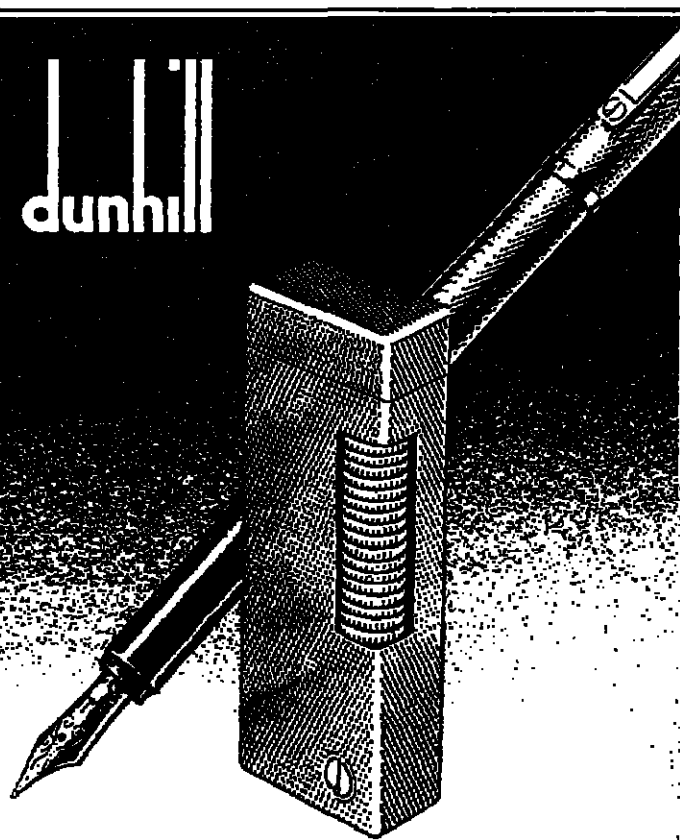
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